APRIL 1982 NUMBER 50

# THE SPACE GAMER

THE MAGAZINE OF ADVENTURE GAMING

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## SUNDAY DRIVERS

A ROLE-PLAYING SUPPLEMENT FOR

## CAR WARS

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, 1982

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*sue also happens to be the April*

*WARS supplement . . . featuring*
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*and 42. And I am the Emperor*

*—Steve Jackson*


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# THE SPACE GAMER

NUMBER 50 — APRIL, 1982

## In This Issue

*This is issue number 50 of THE SPACE GAMER. We've come a long ways since those mimeograph days — and we hope you'll still be with us to see what we look like when issue 100 comes around. This issue also happens to be the April one, but more on that later.*

*Our big feature this time is a nine-page CAR WARS supplement . . . featuring a detailed map, new weapons, two completely-worked-out vehicles, and two scenarios. SUNDAY DRIVERS is designed for role-players; it works best with a free-wheeling referee and two to four players. And if you don't have a good referee (yet), the Midville map makes a great duel arena. Just assume the whole town is abandoned, and go to it!*

*As if one supplement wasn't enough, we also have the third in our Marischal Adventures series — a four-page TRAVELLER adventure. Like the first two, it's in the center of the magazine; you can pull it out and keep it separately.*

*Other features include an updated game index; a new character class for D&D; and Mike Stackpole's review of several recent Judges Guild offerings. And, as you can see, we're a little bit more colorful in this issue!*

*One last thing. As I said above, this is the April issue. Therefore, in that time-honored April tradition, nothing I said above was true. In fact, the only serious articles in the whole magazine are on pages 24 and 42. And I am the Emperor Napoleon. Beam me up, Scotty.*

*—Steve Jackson*

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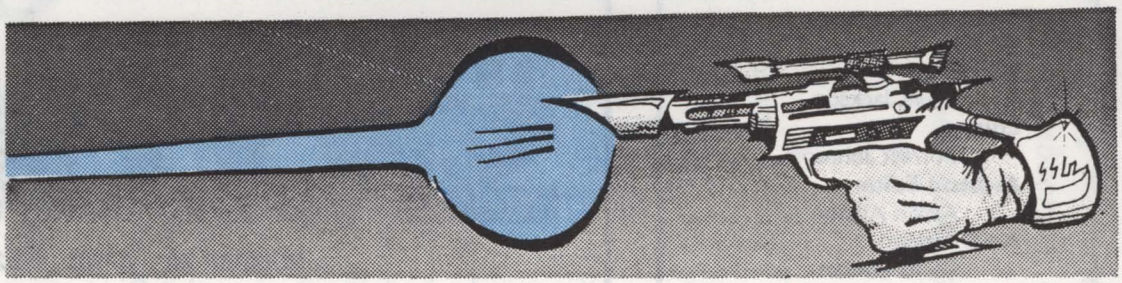
# WHERE WE'RE GOING



From now on, TSG is going to be a little more colorful. Each month, we'll be adding at least one spot color to the interior. This not only lets Denis do fancier illustrations . . . it also means that when we run a map or chart, we can make it more readable. We tried this a few times last year and got generally good responses; this time it's for keeps.

Another (possible) improvement: The TSG advertising picture is beginning to look better than it has for the last few months. There's a direct correlation between the number of ads we get and the number of pages in the magazine . . . more ads, more pages! So, if things continue well, we may be able to get some issues up to 48 pages this year. But you people are going to have to write some more good articles for us. We'd especially like to see:

(a) More "how-to-win" strategy and tactics articles. These always rate high (and they're a personal favorite of mine!) – but we don't get many.

(b) More articles on ***Space Opera*** and ***Aftermath.*** These are two popular systems . . . why aren't more people writing about them? The feedback survey shows you want to *read* about them.

(c) As always, more reviews.

### More Games

We have a couple of games in line for TSG. The "complete game" concept didn't rate incredibly high in the feedback – but it was high enough to keep us working. One of them is a fantasy game designed by Allen Varney, who has been semi-patiently waiting for many months, occasionally writing us pathetic little letters to see if we've forgotten him. Yes, Allen, we have. (Allen has also sent us some ideas for an ad campaign so distressing that we just might try it.) Anyway, what Allen has come up with is a game of wizardly combat . . . but it isn't like any of the piles of magic-battle games of the market now. It's peculiar, and playable.

The second TSG possibility is something I came up with very late one night. I won't give you too many details now (they might change) except to say that it is a multi-player game; it will probably annoy the capital-E Ecologists, but the rest of you will like it; and it is very, very silly. (The last draft had *one* rule that seemed realistic. We took it out.)

### WTWIIG

Which translates "Where *the whole industry* is going." That's anybody's guess – but it's become sort of traditional for this column to include an occasional wild guess about The Future Of Wargaming. The sheer mass of news, gossip, press releases, and (occasionally) games that come across my desk undoubtedly represents enough raw data to allow utterly precise predictions about the next five years – if I were just clever enough. But until I can afford an extra 32K of RAM for my cerebellum, I may just have to remain fallible.

Anyway, it appears that the dreaded "crunch" is coming. Gaming's pundits have been predicting a "shake-out" of the weaker companies for some time . . . but the field defied expectations by continuing to grow and spawn more marginal operations. I'm afraid that may be about over. The economy is catching up with us: some distributors are having slow-pay problems with their customers, which means that publishers' cash flows get weaker. And *that* is what sends a marginal company to the wall. A drop in mail-order sales can hurt you – but several thousand dollars in distributor receivables, representing games you shipped *months* ago and haven't been paid for *at all* – that can kill you. And it may, indeed, kill some of the smaller companies and even one of the "majors." But the industry as a whole will survive. A case-by-case look at the industry, assembled from rumor, hearsay, and whatever hard facts I can pick up:

*TSR.* The Gygax empire is doing just fine; it is now so far ahead of the rest of the adventure-gaming pack that it's not even funny. TSR is diversifying into the crafts field and setting up overseas branches. Paradoxically, it may become less and less of a direct influence on the adventure (war) games market; the TSR strategy is to go for the "mass market," with games that are simpler than anything in the regular wargaming hobby. But TSR is here to stay – and a "mass market" wargame can still be good beer & pretzels fun.

*Avalon Hill.* AH, long the top dog among gaming companies, is still the spiritual leader of the over-20 set. By this I mean that, though it doesn't have D&D, it does turn out a few good, solid titles every year, and I expect it will continue to do so indefinitely; its market position is secure. AH was the first of the major game companies to go into computer games. Its first offerings, though playable, were a couple of years behind the state of the art even when released. Some of the newer crop (i.e., ***Tanktics***) actually show a good deal of innovation, though others are remarkable mostly for their packaging. But AH has made a sizeable commitment to computer games, and they're likely to get much better.

*SPI.* Five years ago, it would have been heresy to suggest that SPI was in trouble. Now it's common talk. Having gone through a couple of staff purges, one boardroom turnover, and a drastic weeding of its line, SPI may be able to hang in there. But don't be surprised if there are some really big changes within the year.

What caused SPI's problems? Ironically, many of the same factors that helped it grow. It was a hobbyist group first

## Next Issue

***Our May issue will feature a complete game scenario for CHAMPIONS;***

***The return of Bruce Webster as our regular computer columnist;***

***Designer's notes for STAR PATROL; and***

***The survey results which we couldn't fit into this issue.***

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and foremost – so products, and whole lines, were introduced because somebody thought they'd be "neat," and many vital business details were overlooked. The popular "game in every issue" *S&T/Ares* format earned kudos and subscriptions – but required a tremendous time commitment and often produced a half-baked game in every issue. The tremendous line of games included, by the law of averages, a large number of turkeys (most now trimmed). But, somehow, SPI's P-R gave the image of a group of well-off highly-professional New York sharpies. This is great – lots of fun at conventions, and very intimidating to the competition. But if they'd said, "Hey, we're a gang of gamers just like you, and we're getting in over our heads," their customers might have been more forgiving. Cross your fingers for SPI – the hobby wouldn't be the same without them.

*Game Designers' Workshop.* No problems here. If I had to pick one company to imitate slavishly, it would be GDW. They put out a good product line, market it in a business-like fashion, make a pretty good dollar, and remain nice guys who have fun at conventions. Even if GDW lost the rest of its game line, the ***Traveller*** phenomenon would insure their success. In sharp contrast to TSR, GDW is very cooperative about offering licenses for "approved for use with ***Traveller***" products. So, while TSR is plagued with "universal fantasy supplement" ripoffs, GDW rakes in the licensing fees and sells more copies of ***Traveller.*** In my opinion, they're a little bit gentle with some of the small companies that produce supplements (translated: some "approved" material is still junk). And a few of GDW's own releases have been disappointing (I guess Marc can't proofread them all). But their batting average is still good. GDW will be around for a long time.

*Metagaming.* Two years ago, it looked as though this company might be on its way right to the top, thanks to its mini-game line. Now the market is crowded with minis, most of which boast better production quality and/or design than the newer Metagaming releases. At least one big distributor has dropped their line. Don't look for a fold, though; Metagaming is a sole proprietorship with no big debts, and ought to be financially solid. A little more attention to playtesting and production quality could put them back in contention.

*Heritage.* This "old guard" miniatures company recently hit the games market with its excellent ***Dwarfstar*** line of mini-games, and more are on the way. Cash flow is the traditional Heritage bane; if they can solve that problem, they'll be solid. If they can't, bye-bye.

*Flying Buffalo.* Again, cash flow is the problem; this is no secret to anyone who reads *Flying Buffalo Quarterly*! The Arizona madpersons have everything else going for them: a good design team, excellent graphics, and alarming creativity. FBI's products are among the prettiest on the market (gone are the days when FBI printed on an offset press so dirty it looked like a mimeograph). The Buffalo could make it big if some venture capital turned up. Otherwise, they'll eventually be squeezed out by mass-market fantasy and more modern PBM games. Pity.

*Adventure Games.* Dave Arneson's company hasn't exactly burned up the shelves – but sales are respectable, and Mr. Arneson is NOT depending on income from ***Adventures in Fantasy*** to make a living. . . . This company has the potential to do one or two games a year *right.* Let's hope they achieve it.

*Nova.* They had a winner with ***Ace of Aces,*** and Nova is following this up with other "book game" ideas. Rumor has it that pre-sales of their gunfighter game have been less than exciting, but this may turn around when the game is actually out. I would say that Nova is probably solid.

*Gamelords.* Lots of talent here. I have no data as to their backing or lack thereof – but if they have any hard-time cash reserve at all, the popular ***Thieves' Guild*** and their licensing agreement for ***The Fantasy Trip*** should see them through a lean year.

*Yaquinto.* Sort of a shortage of hard data here. It can be observed that (a) they have a lot of backing, (b) they have produced a lot of very glossy games, (c) Steve Peek and cohorts show up at any major convention to promote the line, and do a good job of it. There's no question but that the Album Games were a stroke of genius. Question: How are they selling? I don't know. When I ask retailers or convention hucksters what moves well for Yaquinto, they mention ***Swashbuckler,*** and their WWII tank system. That's usually all. Conclusion: Either more promotion needed, or more market research to see what people want to play.

*Task Force.* TFG has a lot of design talent, but their success is spelled ***Star Fleet Battles.*** They've just come out with a Star Fleet electronic game; considering the probable start-up cost to produce this sort of product, I'd call it a make-or-break proposition. If the game goes well, so will TFG. If not . . . good luck, friends! Some of the big boys were badly burned on electronic games last year. May you do better.

*Chaosium.* Graphic excellence, a lot of creativity, and designs ranging from good to otherwise. Like other small companies, cash flow is likely to be the biggest bane.

*Up-and-comers.* There are a lot of new operations just getting started . . . Group One, Gameforms, Marischal Adventures, FASA, Hero Games – to name a few. Again, cash flow is the bugaboo here. If you have a short line, it's MUCH harder to keep the orders coming in at a reasonable rate. But the little guys have one great advantage – they're usually not totally committed to the business as a way to make a living, and can afford to hang on at a time when a slightly bigger operation would sell out or fold!

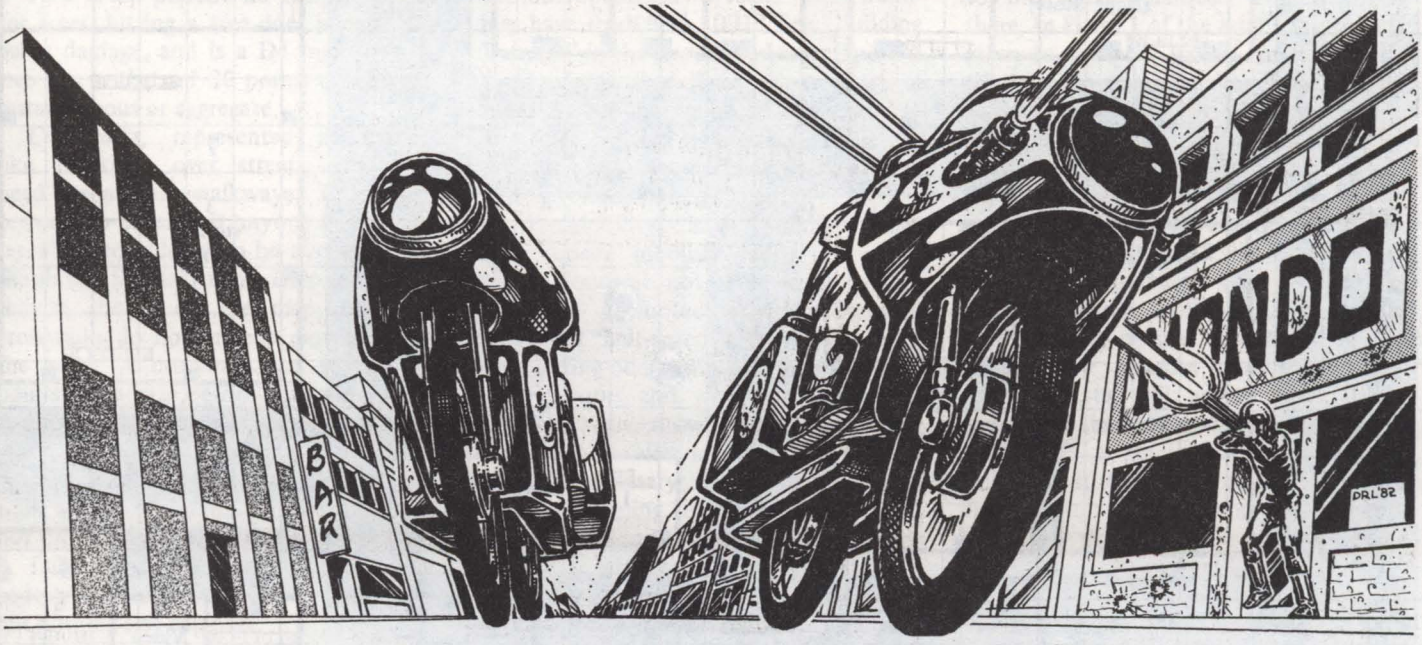
So . . . some of the names will change, and some will go away entirely – but I'd say the game hobby as a whole is healthy. In the words of a certain classic guide: Don't panic.

*–Steve Jackson*

Last note: If any of you publishers out there feel I've misrepresented your operation or your survival odds (for better or worse) – don't fume in silence, let me know! You're welcome to (a) write us a letter about it, (b) submit a Company Report (apparently people like reading these – news rates high!) (c) put us on your press release mailing list if we're not already, and (d) catch me, or any of our staff, at conventions and tell us what you're up to.

*–SJ*

# SUNDAY DRIVERS




## by Stefan Jones & Aaron Allston

Cycle gangs tearing into Midville usually got shot to pieces. If it wasn't the cops doing the shooting, it was the armed civilians' protection group, the Midville Operatives for Neighborhood Defense Organization (MONDO). And if it was neither cops nor MONDOs, it was the town's few die-hard pro autoduellists. Sometimes it was all three.

Once it was none of the three, and that's when the trouble started.

On July 23, Black Jesse's Thunder Turkeys ripped through the city and out again before any guns could be brought to bear on them. In passing, they shot down an overhead crosswalk and the six pedestrians on it. The citizens blamed the duellists and cops for the lack of protection.

On July 25th, a casual remark by an autoduellist ignited tempers, resulting in the bloody Beer Brawl. Joe's Oil Pump, a tavern which catered to duellists and their fans, was burned to the ground.

On the morning of the 29th, a pitched battle in the Midville Duel Arena parking lot resulted in several deaths and the total destruction of one vehicle. There were now three camps: wheels vs. walkers, with the police trying to ignore the whole thing and concentrate on "real problems."

The next day was Sunday. The churches stayed mostly empty. The sporting goods stores did pretty good business that morning . . .

* * *

"Sunday Drivers" is a *Car Wars* supplement for several players and a referee. Both scenarios require at least two players plus ref; Scenario Two (Thunder Turkeys) plays best with a minimum of three plus ref.

In Wheels vs. Walkers, one side operates the autoduellists, and the other side plays the MONDOs. The referee governs the whole thing and plays the town's other important individuals – armed police, weapons emplacements, etc. The Thunder Turkeys scenario postulates a second attack by the cycle gang. In both scenarios, the main scene of action is downtown Midville.

### The Map

The Midville map is rendered in one-fourth normal *Car Wars* scale – that is, ¼" on this map means 1" in actual scale. The referee needs to redraw it into a full-scale combat map. It is perhaps possible to run this lunacy on the reduced map with map pins substituting for the combatants, but obviously this is harder. When finished, the map should be nearly 3' by 4'.

There are some terrain effects peculiar to urban autoduelling. *Sidewalks,* the light blue ½" bands surrounding most city blocks, are debris-littered road (due to news racks, small children, etc.). Debris squares are marked by an asterisk (*). Any maneuver involving crossing from road to sidewalk or vice versa is at a +D1: driving half-on and half-off is also +D1. Pedestrians navigate sidewalks with no problems.

*Chains,* represented by a row of slash marks, stretch across the city's mall entrances. Hitting a chain is a D3 maneuver and does 1 point of damage to both chain and car for every 5 mph the car is moving. Seven points of damage in a single crash or 14 points of cumulative damage will shatter the chain. If a vehicle hits the chain and does not break it, the vehicle stops where it is. Chains can only be broken by ramming. Pedestrians can circumnavigate the chains with no minus.

*Lamp posts* are located at each sidewalk corner; they are shown by dots. A lamp post is like a chain; hitting one is a D3 maneuver and does 1 point of damage to both post and car for every 5mph the car is moving. However, a post will yield to 3 points of damage in one crash (not cumulative). Thus, a car going 15 mph

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Jeans
Mall Office
Shoe Store
Mac Dougall's
Mall
2 stories 5DP
Normal-Markups (Dept. Store)
1
Records
Ice Cream
Liquor
Discount House
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Dewey, Cheatham, & Howe – Attorneys
7
3 stories 6DP
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Second
School District Offices
Vacant office space
Police Station
10DP
Hardware Store
9
IRS
Neutral Bar
2 stories 5DP
Coffee Shop
Office Supply
Bill's Garage
4
2 stories
5DP
Wrecked Edsel
Jail
Municipal Offices
First
10
3 stories
Radio, TV, & Electronic Store
5DP
11
3 stories 5DP
12
Paint Store
3 stories 5DP

or more will knock down a lamp post; one going at 5 or 10 mph will hit it and stop. A post may be destroyed by any weapon except a hand weapon, but it is a hard target: -6 to hit.

*Park areas* present no danger except for trees; hitting a tree does normal collision damage, and is a D4 maneuver. A tree can withstand 20 points of damage, instantaneous or aggregate.

*Crosswalks,* represented as ladder-like markings over streets, are overhead pedestrian walkways. Crosswalks provide no cover, but anyone in the center 1" is considered to be two stories in the air (see Special Rules). Despite the way they're shown on the map, overhead crosswalks do not impede movement on the road. A crosswalk can sustain 10 points of damage before collapsing. Anyone in the center inch of the crosswalk when it collapses will take 2 points of damage; anyone anywhere else on the walk will take 1 point. (Body armor does not protect against this form of damage.) A fallen crosswalk creates an obstacle pedestrians can climb over in 2 seconds, but nothing else can pass.

*Buildings* have the following characteristics:

(1) Number of floors. It should surprise no one that a building listed as "2 floors" will have two stories and a roof.

(2) DP – damage points. This is the "armor value" for the building – the amount of damage the walls can take without opening a "breach." Most buildings have from 5 to 10 DP. See "Building Damage" in the Special Rules section.

(3) Internal defense. Most of these buildings are empty because it's Sunday and there's trouble brewing. Some are occupied and have defenders who are not willing for combatants to enter.

(4) Mobility. Most building interiors impede mobility, even for pedestrians. Some do not. The various mobilities will be noted. When pedestrians move at "half-speed," they may move only during odd-numbered phases.

(5) Doors and windows. Doors and windows are shown by ¼"-½" long rectangles. No distinction is given because none is necessary; it's all the same to someone running for cover. Where there's a door or window on the ground floor there's a window on an upper floor. Pedestrians *may* fire through doors or windows and remain protected by surrounding walls – see "Damage to Buildings" in the Special Rules section, below.

(6) Stairwells and access hatches. Within each building is a ladder-like row of squares representing the staircases. To ascend or descend from one floor to the next, a pedestrian must first move to the square marked for his floor (in other words, if he's on the first floor, he moves to the square marked "1"). He stops there. In Phase 1 of the *next* turn, he may move to the next square. In Phase 1 of the following turn, he may move another square, and so on. Example: Joe McFadden reaches the stairwell (numbered box) of the third floor on Turn 10. On Phase 1 of turn 11, he moves to the unnumbered box between floors 2 and 3. On Phase 1 of turn 12, he moves to the floor level (numbered obx) of the 2nd floor. On Phase 1 of turn 13, he will be able to start normal movement on the second floor, or move one square farther down the stairwell, as he wishes. If the uppermost box of a staircase is marked "R," it is a hatch to the roof of the building. It takes one second to move from the hatch square to any roof square.

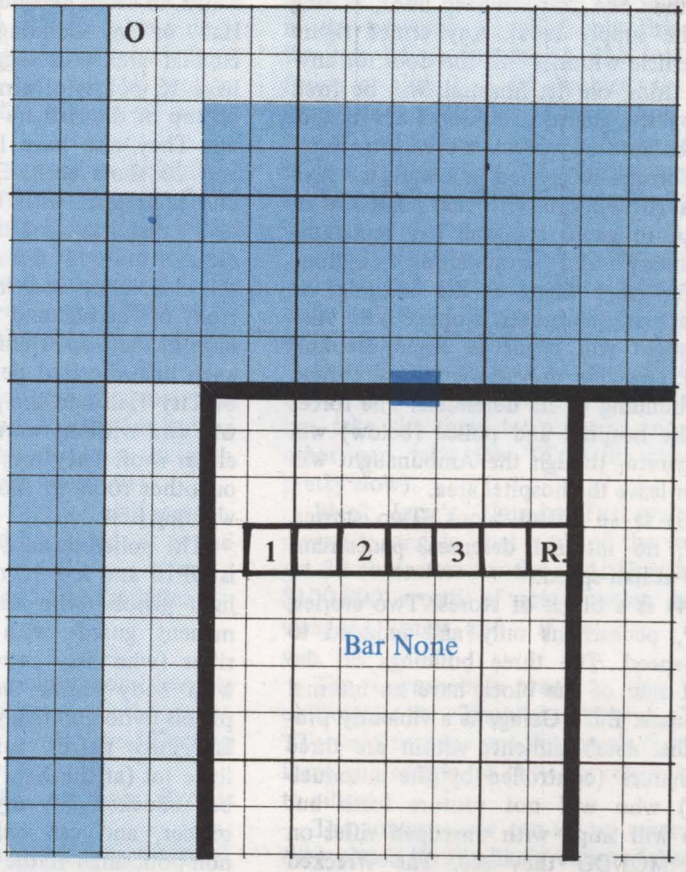
**Town Features**

Each block on the map is marked with a number, as follows:

(1) is the town mall. Two floors, 5DP, no internal defenses, unlimited mobility – up to van-sized vehicles can drive the

# Map Key

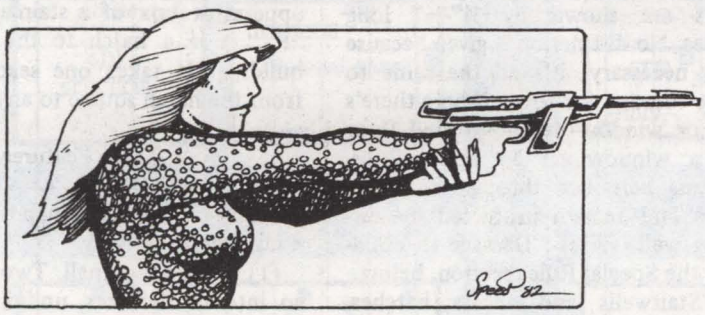
The detail to the right shows one section of the map as it should look when rendered into the correct size. (This is the parking lot and Bar None, 3rd and Elm.) Note that all staircases follow this pattern and ascend left to right. Below, the map legend shows the various terrain types and symbols.




Park
Tree
Sidewalk
Street
Door/Window
* Debris
Chain
Crosswalk
o Street Lamp
Chain-link Fence

length of the interior hallway and *within stores from door to door* with no mobility restriction. This is on the first floor only; the second floor is warehouse, accessible only by pedestrians, who can move at half movement within. This is a fairly normal reduction for building interiors, caused by partitions, furniture, etc.

(2) is the hospital. Three floors, 6DP, unrestricted mobility for pedestrians and motorcycles; nothing else can get in. Although the staff hates to drum up business for itself, it is also charged to protect those in its care. Three guards with armor and rifles are on duty at each door this Sunday, and the Ambunaught, the hospital's armored ambulance, is manned and active at the spot marked "X." Any



breach opened in the hospital will be manned by one of the guards (leaving no less than one guard at each door, as long as the supply lasts). Any armed figure or vehicle within 1" of the door, or anyone firing on the hospital, will be fired on by the guards. The doors are locked; combatants must create a breach to enter. If a breach is opened in a wall, the Ambunaught will cruise to that point and attempt to guard the wall (by remaining stationary and annihilating anything within range firing at the building). If more than one breach is opened, the Ambunaught will begin to circle the hospital, engaging only those who fire upon the building or its defenders. The forces of the hospital and police (below) will cooperate, though the Ambunaught will never leave the hospital area.

(3) is an office block. Two stories, 5DP, no internal defenses, pedestrians only at half-speed.

(4) is a block of stores. Two stories, 5DP, pedestrians only and reduced to half-speed. The three buildings on the west side of the block have no internal defenses. Bill's Garage is a violently pro-duellist establishment; within are three mechanics (controlled by the autoduellists) who will not venture forth but who will snipe with unscoped rifles on any MONDO they see. The Wrecked Edsel Bar is a pro-duellist place, too, containing 3d6 people getting merrily smashed. A MONDO entering or firing upon the Wrecked Edsel will get the same treatment a duellist would in the Bar None (below), for one in three drinkers here have heavy pistols.

(5) is mostly city park; the little building at the south is the museum. One story, 4DP, no internal defense, pedestrians only, at half-speed.

(6) is the main block of the city government. Three stories, 7DP (except where noted), no internal defenses (except where noted), pedestrians only, at half-speed. The City Hall is special: It has 8DP and an internal force of 12 guardsmen with body armor and heavy pistols. In addition, the "x"s in front are two rocket launcher turrets, controlled from within the building, 20 shots each. They can fire on any spot on Elm Street from First to Third, or from Second Street east of City Hall, or any building within the semi-circular area thus suggested. The turrets have 15 points of armor each. The "o"s on top of the Hall are machine-gun bunkers. They also have 15 points of armor and 20 shots each. Each is manned by one policeman with body armor and a heavy pistol as sidearm. The MG bunkers can not quite hit the sidewalk in front of the hall; they can hit Elm directly in front of the hall and East Second to the edge of the map. Their main purpose is to keep unauthorized persons off the roofs of City Hall and the police station; they will fire without warning on anyone on either roof. They may fire on pedestrians on other roofs in Block 6, but will give warning first.

The police station, on the same block, is DP10 and has 10 regular staffers with light pistols (who stay inside), two permanent guards with body armor and rifles (who stay inside), six patrolmen with body armor, shotguns, and heavy pistols (who don't stay inside all the time), and three patrol cruisers parked in the little lot (at the Xs). The cruisers cannot be unlocked by anyone but a police officer, and can only be driven by a non-policeman if the armor is blown off one side to permit entry.

As a rule, the municipal forces (the police cruisers and City Hall guns) will enter the action only if City Hall or the police station is endangered. They will act immediately if either building is breached. In addition, each time any weapon strikes either building and does damage, the referee rolls two dice. If he rolls a number less than or equal to the damage done, the mayor will order action. (The referee may play the city forces himself or give them to another player.) The patrolmen will immediately leave the police station for the cruisers, and the City Hall weapons will open fire on ANY armed men or vehicles within range, starting (if possible) with those that did the damage. The officers in the cruisers will circle Block 6. Any armed men or vehicles they find in any street adjacent to Block 6 will be warned once. If they do not surrender, they will be attacked next turn. If fired on by foes outside this "beat," the cruisers may pursue, but probably will not. If the hospital is attacked, it is also possible that one or more cruisers will be sent to aid the Ambunaught.

Surrender: Anyone may surrender to the police by dropping his weapons (or leaving his vehicle), raising his hands, and walking to City Hall or the police station. He will be let inside, dragged to a cell, and released the next week. No points are lost if a character surrenders. The police will react with great hostility to anyone firing on a surrendered character, but they will also do their best to kill anyone who fakes a surrender and then attacks.

Note that a player loses points for his characters killed by the police, and does NOT (except for the Thunder Turkeys) get points for killing police!

(7) is an office block. Three stories, 6DP, no internal defenses, pedestrians only, at half-speed.

(8) is also an office block. Three stories, et cetera, like block (7). The little rectangle in the N is the Bar None, a bar which caters to MONDOs. Within are 3d6 party-goers anticipating a victory bash. 1/3 of these people have a heavy pistol and will use them upon an autoduellist entering or firing upon the bar. They will only leave the bar if it is likely to collapse. If they leave, they disperse, running at top speed for the edge of the map by whatever routes seem safest. They will not return fire while fleeing unless they are cornered.

(9) is a varied block. Two stories, 5DP, no internal defenses (with exceptions listed below), pedestrians only, at half-speed. There is a neutral bar on the block; it contains 4d6 hard-drinking bozos. One in four drinkers has a light pistol; the bar-

keep has a shotgun. These folk want nothing to do with the conflict, feel pretty safe this near to City Hall's defenses and will all run from the bar if it is fired upon by anything heavier than a heavy pistol (except the barkeep, who will defend his establishment).

(10-12) are all three-story office and retail store blocks, 5DP, no internal defenses, pedestrians only, at half-speed.

**Movement**

Vehicles move normally on roads. Sidewalks count as roads, with the exceptions listed above, as do parking lots. The only building a vehicle may enter is the Mall.

Pedestrians move normally through most terrain. They can only enter or leave buildings at doors/windows and breaches. It is possible to jump from windows. First story and roof – 1 die damage, minus 4. Second story and roof – 1 die damage. 3rd story and roof – 1 die damage, plus 1.

Movement on rooftops is unimpeded, and pedestrians on a rooftop have no defense (but see "Line of Sight," below). Only pedestrians can get to a roof. The roof hatches of City Hall and the police station/jail are locked from the outside, and have DP 7 if someone tries to break in; other roof hatches are unlocked.

Movement on rooftops is also unimpeded by the divisions between buildings in a block; someone on the roof of Bill's Garage could run westward the length of the block. The only things that impede building-to-building rooftop movement are gaps between buildings, and a running man can leap a half-inch (7½-foot) gap – move his counter across the gap at normal speed.

Movement within buildings is forestalled by walls, of course. It is possible to use a grenade or other weapon to blow a hole in a wall between buildings. Treat this like any other breach – see below.

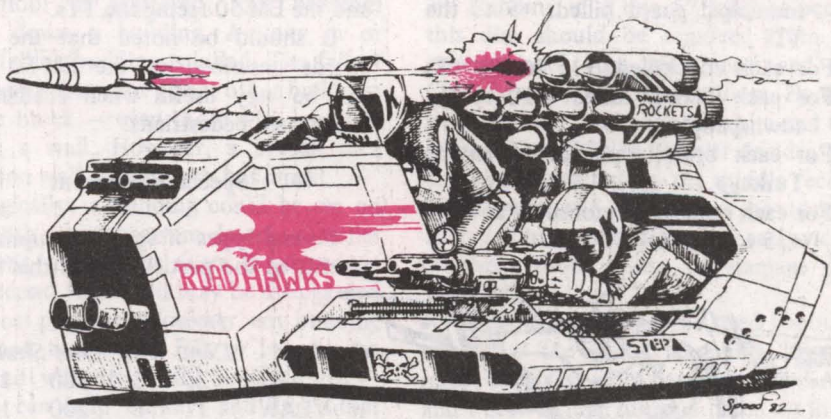
Vehicles and pedestrians may move off the map, but may not return. No combat occurs off the map. (The ref may extend the map as much as he likes, though.) West of the Drag (Kazango) is a chain-link fence (DP4, can only be ruptured by ramming). Past the fence is an open field (considered debris-littered terrain).

**Scenarios**

*Wheels vs. Walkers*

This is the scenario of the introductory narrative. The duellists and the MONDOs have spent all night working up their courage, and have congregated for the purpose of destroying one another. The MONDOs start in the parking lot at 3rd and Elm; the duellists begin in the lot behind Bill's Garage. The duellist player gets two to five characters, and $35,000 with which to build either two or three cars. The MONDO player gets twenty characters and $15,000. He may buy any hand weapon on the hand weapons chart, mines, spikes, body armor, and some special equipment which will be explained below. Each side wants to destroy the other. However, both sides are natives of the town; the victory conditions reflect a slight reluctance to destroy their home.

Victory points are awarded to each side, added up, and compared as follows:




POINTS AWARDED:

For each autoduellist killed: +20 to the MONDOs if there were 5 duellists, +25 if there were only four, and so on: 100 possible points.

For each MONDO killed: +5 to the duellists

For each breach opened in a building: -1 to the opener

For each building destroyed: -5 to the last side to open a breach

For each bargoer of an opposite orientation killed: +1 to the killer

For each mechanic killed: +3 to the MONDOs

For each vehicle or combatant that leaves the map: -3 to the one leaving (Note that this means a car with two occupants is worth -9!)

For each neutral bargoer, civil servant, or hospital worker killed: -2 to the killer

For each cop killed: -5 to the killer

RESULTS:

One side has 50 points more than the other: Total victory

One side has 25 points more: Decisive victory

One side has 10 points more: Pyrrhic victory

If either side has a negative point total, all survivors from that group will be lynched.

*Thunder Turkeys*

When Black Jesse heard about the big fight in town, he thought it was the perfect time for another raid. But he talked too much about his plans . . .

All damaged buildings, chains, etc., are repaired. All weapons at the City Hall and all police cruisers are repaired and fully supplied with ammo.

The townspeople have enough heavy chain (the sort at the mall) to block six streets, or one street in six places, or whatever. All chains must be in place before play begins. The TTs will be able to see any chain in line of sight.

The town gets the equivalent of the autoduellist and MONDO forces from the previous scenario, plus the three police cruisers. (The Ambunaught performs as in the previous scenario, only firing if the hospital is breached.) The internal forces at City Hall are doubled; the internal forces at the police station are *tripled.* These men will not leave their buildings. The six patrolmen begin play in their cruisers at any location the town chooses.

For this scenario, the bars are empty, and the mechanics at Bill's have (for today, at least) become part of the 20 MONDO ground fighters.

One player can play each of the four forces (this is simplest), or one player can take the three town forces and the other can take the TTs (this can be pretty slow).

Black Jesse's Thunder Turkeys, the meanest gang in that part of the state, get 30 characters for the raid. They have $100,000 worth of gear: cycles, hand weapons, armor, and – if they like – one van.

The townspeople want to trap and obliterate the Thunder Turkeys. The TTs want to wipe out the town's fighting force and escape, so they can return later to pillage.

The townspeople can set up wherever they please (in the likely event of dissension among players, each player sets up his own forces). However, nobody can

set up on Kazango or Fourth, since the TTs will enter from that direction. The Turkeys ride in from North Kazango, at any speed, and will immediately spread out to accomplish their objective of destruction. From there on, it's a free-for-all. If the Turkeys stay too long, they're probably going to be wiped out; they want to use their superior mobility to destroy and kill as much as possible and then turn tail.

POINTS AWARDED:

For each autoduellist killed: +20 to the TTs (+25 if there are only four duellists to start with, and so on)

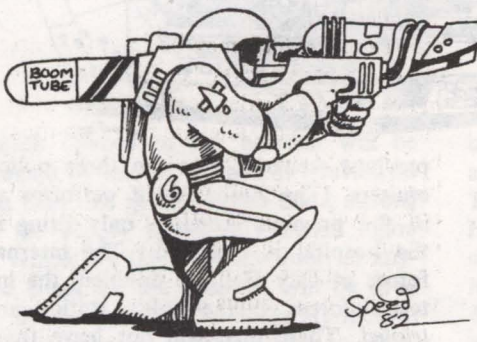
For each MONDO, hospital worker, or municipal guard killed: +5 to the TTs

For each cop killed: +15 to the TTs

For each Turkey killed: +10 to the townspeople

For each breach opened: +1 to the Turkeys

For each building demolished: another +15 to the Turkeys




The referee may choose to award a few extra points to the Turkeys for especially risky and/or destructive behavior.

RESULTS:

Consider the townspeoples' scores one combined score for the purpose of victory conditions.

One side has 50 points more: Total victory

One side has 20 points more: Marginal victory

If the townspeople end up at zero or less, they hire a pro guard unit. If the Turkeys end up at zero or less, they disband.

If it turns out that the townspeople have won, compare their three scores to see which group came out the best in the eyes of the town.

*A Sunday Drive with the EM-50*

This situation is also appropriate for the vehicle described in TSG 49, the EM-50. Some suggestions:

After all the other scenarios are finished, the townspeople could decide they needed additional protection for the town and buy a Killer Winnebago for the MONDOs.

Or, the National Guard could decide that the situation in Midville is too volatile and send in a crew of guardsmen to put the town under martial law. The townspeople, of course, will resent this . . . Give the Guard an EM-50 full of heavily-armed troops and let it take on the duellists and MONDOS together (the police have sensibly left town and the City Hall weapons are not in use).

Or, the Thunder Turkeys scenario could be replayed with only the MONDOs and the EM-50 facing the TTs.

It should be noted that the wheel-guards described in the EM-50 article can be very useful when duellists face well-armed pedestrians!

**Special Equipment**

Several types of special equipment are permitted the participants in this lunacy.

| G | Item | Dice Dam. | To Hit | Cost | Shots | CPS |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2 | LAW | 2 | 8 | $ 500 | 1 | * |
| 1 | VLAW | 1 | 8 | 200 | 1 | * |
| 5 | Recoilless | 2 | 7 | 1500 | 3 | $35 |
| 2 | " Clip | - | - | 500 | 3 | $35 |

The "G" column indicates the number of grenades this item replaces in the 6-grenade load allowed a pedestrian.

The VLAW ("very light antitank weapon") is a one-use device, a disposable rocket-launcher, so the cost of the weapon is also the CPS. This weapon resembles its contemporary counterpart, but does less damage, being essentially a "Saturday Night Special" LAW. The "regular" LAW is similar to the contemporary version. Each VLAW or LAW weighs 10 lbs. Note that no sustained-fire bonus is possible when using a LAW or VLAW.

The hand-held recoilless is a high-tech rapid-fire anti-tank weapon. It weighs 65 pounds; one fully loaded clip weighs 10 pounds. Three shots may be fired consecutively with this weapon; if another clip is on hand, it takes two seconds standing still to load it in. Note that this weapon, ammo, and spare clips must each be bought separately.

Also available are laser-targeting rifle scopes, which add a +1 to hit with all hand-held ballistic weapons. A scope costs $500; weight is negligible.

Mines and spikes may be purchased by the MONDOS at regular ***Car Wars*** prices. A box of mines or spikes weighs only 5 lbs. and may be carried instead of 2 grenades; it may be carried one-handed. Dumping such a box is a regular action (like firing a weapon) and creates an ordinary mine or spike counter on the map; this counter may be seen by any duellist within 6" unless hidden by smoke, etc. Mines or spikes may be dropped two other ways:

(a) By a running character who does not stop running. There is a 1 in 6 chance that they will scatter badly and be useless.

(b) By throwing them out a window! There is a 50-50 chance (regardless of the height) that they will scatter. If they don't scatter, they will land at any spot (within 1" of the window) that the thrower chooses.

Only one hand-held recoilless rifle will be available to the MONDOS. There is no limit to the amount of other gear they may acquire, except their budget.

**Special Rules**

*Height modifications to hit:* Shooting at a pedestrian on the same level is at no extra minus. At the second floor and crosswalk tops, a -1 is imposed. Third stories and second-story roofs are at a -2. Third-story roofs are at a -3. There is no minus to attacks from above, except when throwing objects. Thus, throwing a grenade from a third-story window incurs a -2.

*Out-of-combat movement:* If everyone starts a turn with no one to shoot at – which will occur primarily in the first few turns of the game – an alternate movement system may be used. The autoduellist player moves the car which he sees will first encounter an enemy the full length of its move for the turn, *or* up to the point when it can fire upon the enemy, if it can engage the enemy that turn. All his other vehicles are moved up to that phase. Then, all the pedestrians are moved up to the same phase. (If the pedestrians' move eliminates the possibility of combat, play out the rest of the turn normally.) Example: Martin "Gonzo" Cutter is driving north on Elm at 35 mph with no enemy in sight; none of the other duellist vehicles on the board are in combat, and Cutter is closest to an enemy. Harold Milsap is quivering just around the corner, at the SE corner of Elm and 3rd, too far from a door to make it to safety this turn. At phase 6, Cutter's vehicle begins to turn the corner and establishes a line of sight on Milsap, creating a combat-possible situation. All of the autoduellists are moved up to phase 6, and then all of the pedestrians are moved to phase 6.

Cutter is firing on Milsap and Milsap is targeting one of Cutter's tires. Since Milsap was waiting for the car to turn the corner, the GM will probably (logically) allow him to shoot first. 'Bye, Milsap. In the Thunder Turkeys scenario, the sequence (should it ever come up) is cops, duellists, Turkeys, MONDOs.

*Limited knowledge:* No one knows what arms an opponent bears until he fires them, except for LAWs, submachine guns, and the pedestrians' recoilless.

There are two ways to handle movement. The easiest is to assume that both the duellists and the MONDOs have many interested friends around town who will not actively participate in the combat but who will keep them apprised of their enemies' actions by short-wave radio. Thus, all counters are visible at all times. However, no one in a building may be fired on unless he is in line-of-sight of the attacker.

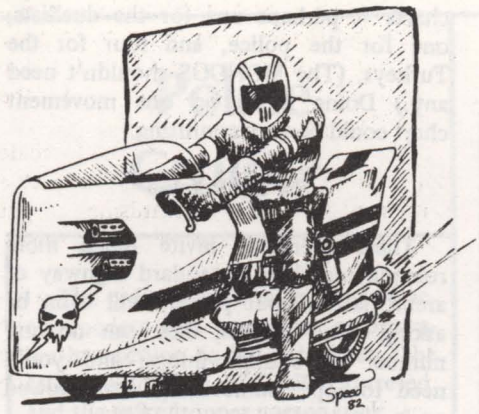
The more realistic and complex way is to assume that some movement can be hidden. The MONDOs know where the duellists' vehicles are at all times. The duellists know where any MONDOs in the streets, on rooftops, on crosswalks, or on sidewalks are. A person on foot inside a building or in the park is not visible until he fires. A person firing from a building remains visible until he moves. A person firing from the park remains visible until he moves 3" away from the place where he fired, and he cannot escape detection if there is an enemy within 6". When a pedestrian is undetected, the player must keep the GM apprised of his movements by passing notes.

In our playtests, we have found it works best to have movement visible most of the time, but to allow hidden movement (via note-passing) whenever a player thinks it is important enough to go to the trouble of writing it down.

*Building damage:* Each building has a DP value indicating the strength of its walls. Any weapon damage doing at least this much damage will produce a "breach." Lesser damage has no effect. Example: The police station has DP 10. A weapon result of 10 points damage or more will produce a breach at the affected spot. However, any number of smaller effects may accumulate without causing harm – there is no need to keep track of building damage that does not create a breach.

Make up breach markers to use as needed; mark each one with the level of the breach. A breach, once created, is identical to a door or window for game purposes.

If any building accumulates four




breaches, it will collapse. It does not matter whether the breaches are on one floor or scattered; four breaches bring down a building. Anyone in or on a falling building is killed. The fall of a building does not affect other buildings in the block – even those with which it shares a wall. However, a breach in a common wall affects both buildings!

Logically, a building could be set on fire with flamethrowers, lasers, or other weapons. Since ***Car Wars*** is played in one-second turns, this may be disregarded for most purposes. However, any building breached twice with FTs or lasers is on fire and will eventually be destroyed – which can help Turkeys and hurt other players.

*Fire through doors and windows:* A line of sight may be traced through any door, window, or breach. Therefore, a pedestrian may stand inside a building and fire outside. He must, however, be adjacent to the door or window for this line of sight to be traced.

A pedestrian leaning around the edge of a door presents a very small target. Therefore, although he may be fired at, he has the protection of the wall. He is not hit unless the wall is breached. Example: Alfie Smythe is leaning out a window when Mr. Cutter fires his laser. Cutter needs an 8 to hit, and gets it. The wall is DP 6. Cutter rolls 10 points of damage. 6 go to the wall (breaching it); the other 4 go to Smythe. If the wall had not been breached, Smythe would have been unhurt.

However, a very good shot can go right through a door or window. If the roll to hit in such a case is at least 2 better than needed (i.e., an 8 or better is needed, and a 10 is rolled) then the pedestrian AND the wall both take the full amount of damage. Since the shot passed through the opening in the front wall, the breach appears in the *back* wall.

*Firing at multiple targets:* There are two ways in which a large weapon may be used on more than one pedestrian: *area effect* and *burst effect.*

Weapons which may be used for area effect are the machinegun, submachine gun, flamethrower, and laser. These are the weapons that can "sweep" an area. When using such a weapon against several pedestrians within 1" of one another, the firer may attempt to hit several at once. He must roll to hit each intended victim. Those he hits take half the damage roll for the weapon (round up). Exception: a flamethrower does full damage against all targets in a group! When some people in a group are hit and some are missed, the "miss" occurs to one side or both of the group, at the *choice of the player being attacked.* Example: Four MONDOs are standing in a line 1" long; as people this dim should be removed from the genetic pool, the aforementioned Mr. Cutter decides to deep-fry them. He fires with his laser, and rolls two hits and two misses. The MONDO player decides that the two characters in the middle receive the damage, and the two on the sides are spared. Cutter rolls a five, so each victim receives three points of damage (2½ rounded up).

Weapons which may be used for burst effect are the rocket launcher, AT gun, mine, recoilless rifle, heavy rocket, LAW, and VLAW. These rules are based on those for the grenade, which is the archetypal burst-effect weapon. Whenever any burst-effect weapon goes off, any pedestrian within 2" of the detonation takes one die of damage. For mines, LAWS and VLAWS, this radius is only 1" (mines measure from the edge of the counter). A pedestrian behind an intact wall or vehicle is not affected. Thus, if a rocket hits a wall and breaches it, the burst covers a 2" circle – but if the wall is not breached (see above) the burst is only a half-circle, and those in the building are not harmed.

*Line of sight:* In order to destroy something, you must see it. Obviously, a vehicle cannot point its machine guns at a victim on the other side of a building and expect to hit him. If an attacker can trace a straight line to a target without crossing an obstacle – i.e., a building or tree – it can fire on it. Crosswalks do not count as obstructions to sight. A person atop a roof may move 1" back from the edge and be out of sight of someone shooting from a lower elevation. A building that has been demolished does count as an obstruction. A wrecked car does not count as an obstruction unless the target is a pedestrian; of course, the vehicle may be shot through to get to the victim.

*Missing:* In the basic ***Car Wars*** rules, if you miss, the machine gun burst or heavy rocket or grenade magically ceases to

exist. Obviously, this is inappropriate here. For simplicity's sake, assume that any miss is a near-miss – the shot has gone over the victim's head, or the exact center of his vehicle.

A missed shot fired *horizontally* goes on straight until it leaves the map or encounters an obstacle; in the latter case it does its standard damage to whatever it hits. (If a potential victim is standing or driving in the *exact* line of fire, roll to hit him with any additional range modifiers and an additional -2 because you weren't aiming at him.) Exception: A missed shot fired at someone in a building may hit an upper story, if any. Roll one die. On a 1 or 2 it hits the second floor. On a 3 or 4 it hits the third floor. On a 5 or 6 it misses and leaves play entirely.

A grenade, or any weapon fired at a *downward* angle, will overshoot by 1 to 6 inches if it misses. Roll one die to find the amount by which it overshoots. If there is a wall or other target in the way, of course, that object takes full damage.

Any weapon fired at an *upward* angle and missing its target has no effect; the projectile will eventually blow a large hole in the countryside. Exceptions: (a) Grenades thrown upwards (obviously, at a window) and missing will explode at the base of that building. (b) If a weapon is fired from the ground to the second floor of a building and misses, there is a 1/3 chance it will hit the third floor.

*Bracing:* Pedestrians who fire hand-held weapons while standing next to a stable surface – doorframe, wall, wrecked car, but *not* another pedestrian – receive a +1 to hit. This modifier comes from the pedestrian bracing his weapon against that stable surface, and is cumulative with the +1 he'll get from being stationary. A pedestrian can lie down to receive the same bonus, but lying down and standing up each take a full second for the MONDOs (figuring into that time the amount of concentration they need to deal with their equipment). Rooftops have low (6" or so) balustrades which can be used for bracing; these provide no cover.

### Notes on Components

The GM needs to prepare some extra counters to run this scenario. First, he needs perhaps 20 ½" by ½" counters labelled "breach." He needs an additional 20 ¼" by ½" counters representing pedestrians. The duellists and the police cars can be adequately supplied by the normal game components. An additional 24 ½" by ½" motorcycle counters need to be made up. Miniatures may also be used.

It would also be appropriate for the GM to photocopy several movement charts – perhaps one for the duellists, one for the police, and four for the Turkeys. (The MONDOS shouldn't need any.) Doing it all on one movement chart could be very confusing.

### To the Referee

These scenarios invite much more role-playing than a standard highway or arena battle; your players will soon be asking you whether they can do any number of strange things, and you'll need to cope. Some things that showed up in playtesting:

*Caches.* Any "local" group (but not the Turkeys) ought to be able to hide some of their gear around town (with sympathizers?) to pick up during play.

*"Loot the bodies!"* The MONDO player should mark each of his counters with an ID number or letter, and keep good records of who has what – because when somebody gets shot up, both he and his foes may want to recover the gear. The same goes for any other characters.

*Other things to buy.* Your players will immediately think of things they'd rather have than plain old guns. If it could be bought beforehand, let them buy it with their initial allotment; if it could be grabbed during the fight, they can try! Some of the things that have come up have been heavy chain ($10 a foot); paint ($8 per gallon); oil (regular autoduellist prices); plastic garbage cans ($10 apiece); rope (free – everybody has some around the house); electric train transformers (two for free, the rest cost $20 each); auto batteries ($50 each for good ones); mannequins (not for sale, but can be taken from a clothing store during play); grain alcohol ($10 a fifth before play; free at the liquor store during play if you have a gun) and newspapers (available everywhere). One thing they can't get is gasoline; there's no more, which is why all the cars are electric! So much for cheap Molotovs.

*Plots and Inventions.* Having bought two or three wierd things, your players will want to assemble them into something strange. Let them (every town has a good share of jackleg mechanics). Just remember that it's expensive to build gadgets, and they don't always work. It can be a nuisance to calculate the combat effect of something strange – but it's worth it when the duellists round the corner and are confronted with . . . a plastic garbage can with a string leading to the third-story window?

*Settling strange actions.* Inevitably, the players will want to do something unusual – jump into the open top of a roofless car, throw a rifle from the roof to be caught by someone on the ground, throw one grenade from each hand. A good technique is to hand them two dice and say "Roll high." A result of 2 brings disastrous failure and (if possible) death. He fell under the car / caught the rifle in his teeth / fumbled a grenade and blew himself up. An 11 or 12 is total success. In-between rolls are in-between results, graded (wholly subjectively) on the referee's opinion of the difficulty of the action. In a game system where there are almost no special "talents," this works out fine.

*Tell them what they see, not what's there.* This is especially important when they encounter something new. They can see it's a compact with a turret, but maybe not how many people are in it. They can see it's a chain, but they may not see the fishhooks. And so on. The two-dice system is good here, too. Roll two dice and DON'T let them see the result. Then describe what they see. A low roll means you tell a convincing lie. A high roll means lots of accurate detail. A medium roll means a brief report with few details – maybe not all accurate. As the situation progresses, fill them in on their new observations. "You've just noticed that the gunner in that car is a dummy and there are no guns in the turret . . . "

As referee, you're half moderator, half storyteller. Be creative and you'll have as much fun as the players.

*This scenario was inspired by a Fritz Lieber short story, "X Marks the Pedwalk."*

# Police Cruiser

VEHICLE PLANNING SHEET
POLICE CRUISER

| Vehicle Wt. | Capacity | | Acceleration | HC | Total $ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6,600 lbs | | | 5 mph. | 3 | $19,100 |

| Item | Cost | Wt. | Spaces | Total Wt. | Spaces Left | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Body Size | 800 | 1800 | | 1800 | 19 | Luxury |
| Chassis Str. | 800 | | | | | X Hvy |
| Power Plant | 3000 | 1100 | 6 | 2900 | 13 | Super |
| Suspension | 1200 | | | | | HC: 3 Hvy |
| Tires | 2000 | 300 | | 3200 | | 4 x solid |
| Driver | | 150 | 2 | 3350 | 11 | |
| Gunner | | 150 | 2 | 3500 | 9 | |
| Weapon | 2000 | 300 | 2 | 3800 | 7 | MG x 2 |
| Ammo | 600 | 100 | | 3900 | | 2 loads |
| Weapon | 1500 | 300 | 2 | 4200 | 5 | Recoil. |
| Ammo | 350 | 50 | | 4250 | | 1 load |
| Weapon | 100 | 25 | 1 | 4275 | 4 | Spike-dropper |
| Ammo | 200 | 50 | | 4325 | | 1 load |
| Weapon | | | | | | |
| Ammo | | | | | | |
| Weapon | | | | | | |
| Ammo | | | | | | |
| Armor | 3600 | 1800 | | 6125 | | 180 pts. |
| Accessory | 1000 | – | – | 6125 | 4 | computer (2a) |
| Accessory | 1500 | 200 | – | 6325 | 4 | Turret |
| Accessory | 50 | – | – | 6325 | 4 | MG link |
| Accessory | | | | | | |
| Totals | 19,100 | | | 6,325 | | |

The police cruiser is designed to accommodate two passengers or prisoners in addition to the patrolmen. The MGs are forward, the RR is turreted, and the spikedropper goes in back.

The Ambunaught has one driver and one paramedic, and can carry two patients, one on each stretcher. It's not really a combat vehicle – hence its low handling class – but is heavily armed enough to last out a decent battle. The MG is forward and the RR is turreted. There is a lot of available room up front, which is necessary for the paramedic to fulfill his duties.

# The Ambunaught

VEHICLE PLANNING SHEET
AMBUNAUGHT

| Vehicle Wt. | Capacity | | Acceleration | HC | Total $ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 7,200 lbs. | | | 5 mph | 0 | $16,250 |

| Item | Cost | Wt. | Spaces | Total Wt. | Spaces Left | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Body Size | 1000 | 2000 | | 2000 | 24 +6 | Van |
| Chassis Str. | 1000 | | | | | X Hvy |
| Power Plant | 3000 | 1100 | 6 | 3100 | 18 +6 | Super |
| Suspension | | | | | | HC: 0 Lt. |
| Tires | 1200 | 300 | | 3400 | | 6 x PR |
| Driver | | 150 | 2 | 3550 | 16 +6 | |
| Gunner | | 150 | 2 | 3700 | 14 +6 | Paramed |
| Weapon | 1500 | 300 | 2 | 4000 | 12 +6 | Recoil. |
| Ammo | 350 | 50 | | 4050 | | 1 load |
| Weapon | 1000 | 150 | 1 | 4200 | 11 +6 | MG |
| Ammo | 500 | 50 | | 4250 | | 1 load |
| Weapon | | | | | | |
| Ammo | | | | | | |
| Weapon | | | | | | |
| Ammo | | | | | | |
| Weapon | | | | | | |
| Ammo | | | | | | |
| Armor | 4500 | 2100 | | 6350 | | 150 pts. |
| Accessory | 1500 | 200 | – | 6550 | 11 +6 | Turret |
| Accessory | 500 | 100 | 2 | 6650 | 11 +9 | 2 stretchers |
| Accessory | 2000 | 100 | 2 | 6750 | 11 +2 | medical equip. |
| Accessory | | | | | | |
| Totals | 16250 | | | 6,750 | | |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## FEATURED REVIEW:

# Judges Guild Adventures

### by Michael Stackpole

I stood and carefully stepped back over the chalked lines of the pentacle. I retreated to my typing table and quickly used the chalk to draw a circle about it and me, just in case the demon didn't like my sacrifice. That was his problem. The grimoire said I had to offer a sacrifice; it didn't say what kind. The five booklets looked lonely in there.

I seated myself and began to type out the ritual phrases. Almost immediately, a spark of light appeared, hovering above the booklets. Then it began to give off smoke which congealed into the form of a demon. "Who dares?" it bellowed in a voice designed to strike terror into the hearts of the uninitiated. "Oh, it's you. What do you want?"

Despite my experience, sweat began to dampen my fatigue shirt. "First off, Bunkie, keep your voice down. The landlady almost threw me out after your last visit." (It's always best to let them know who's in control from the start.) "I want your advice on what I should do about Judges Guild and their products."

The demon assumed a lotus position as he floated, and stared down at the five products beneath him. "Why? You don't work for them. What difference does it make to you?"

I lifted my head and locked my green eyes on his blazing red ones. "There are lots of gamers out there who don't get a chance to look at what they are buying until they've paid for it. As a reviewer, I get my chance to see the products out of their packaging. I can warn gamers about this stuff."

"Ah, mortals, always meddling in others' affairs . . ."

"You're not here to pass judgement," I snarled.

"No, that is *your* job. Fine. Tell me what is wrong with these products and I'll advise you." He looked smug.

"OK, Ignatus, take at look at that first product, ***Marooned on Ghostring.***" His taloned paw grabbed it from the top of the stack. Its purple cover contrasted nicely with his scaly green skin. "It is designed for use with ***Traveller,*** a science fiction role-playing game. It is 28 pages long; less than half of it text, the rest is illustrations. The players are told that their ship has mis-jumped and ended up in a system previously thought to be uninhabited. The equipment they need to repair the ship is on a world that is broadcasting radio signals. The players also know that any information they can gather about the world will be valuable, doubly so if they can avoid being noticed by the natives."

The demon flipped through the booklet. "I don't see what is wrong here. They have three cities fully mapped out and upwards of 28 businesses described for each."

"Read a sample business there, your highness."

He paused for a second, then read aloud, " 'Kinkey's Shoe Shine Stand: The outside of Kinkey's has seating for three citizens. Unknown to authorities, Kinkey is a bookie and a numbers runner.' It is business number 23 in the city of New Carthos." He grinned and revealed a mouth full of horrible teeth.

"Right. Now look at the map of New Carthos. Do you see any numbers to key business 23? Any numbers on any of the maps to key any of the businesses?"

"No."

"And dear old Kinkey isn't described, either. I suppose it's because all aliens will look alike to spacefarers."

"Humans all look alike to me."

"Fine, but you are not a spacer attempting to travel unnoticed on this world. The natives are 1.4 meters tall and covered with creamy fur. They have large eyes with nictating membranes and tendrils at the lower corners of their mouths for holding food or objects close to their eyes. They also have hands; one might wonder how both tendrils and hands evolved on the same creature . . ."

"No matter, it is only a game."

"Right . . . here's another problem. Read the description of the cock fighting establishment on page 12."

" 'Gazor's Cock Fights: On the waterfront is a large building that houses cockfights. Liquor flows like water and many credits change hands here, as the handlers bring their champions to fight. Gazor has many cocks of his own, and gets a cut on every bet.' "

"Can you see the problem there?"

He looked at me with disdain. "Of course, worm. There are no hints on how to run cock fights for the players. They might as well sit around and wager on dice rolls . . . actually, I prefer to pair off damned souls. They can be entertaining, if you prod them enough. You might do pretty well yourself . . ."

I hurriedly changed the subject. "The biggest beef I have with ***Ghostring*** is the artwork."

"You use the term 'artwork' under protest, I assume?"

"Aye. If you look carefully, you notice that the same piece of dreadful artwork used on the back of the booklet is used as an interior illo. And you see that picture of a museum map?"

"I didn't notice any reference to a museum map in the text, either."

"And they want $5.98 for this!"

The demon snorted and launched it back over his shoulder. It burst into flames and vanished.

He was already reaching for ***Rogue Moon of Spinstorm*** before I could point it out to him. "There is something familiar about this cover." He frowned, making his appearance even nastier.

"The woman is from a Frazetta piece, a Burroughs cover, I believe."

"So she is. Isn't that illegal?"

"Sure. I told a Judges Guild official about it, and he said, 'Well, the Old Masters used to do it [copy from each other]. Besides, the reason we allowed him [Rick Houser] to do that is because this was some of his first work for us.' That doesn't make it legal. It's still a blatant violation of copyright. The background of this piece is an old interior illo from

another JG *Traveller* product."

The demon flipped through the booklet. "This one looks much better written than the first you showed me. Having the adventurers scout out a base abandoned 200 years in the past to try and figure out what happened sounds interesting; I've always enjoyed mysteries. Did I ever tell you about the time we caught the oil industry lobbyist on the Fifth Circle?"

"Never mind. Dave Sering does a fine job with the writing and general design. The mystery aspect of this adventure, however, is horrible. There are seven clues scattered around the two bases and battle raft presented for exploration. None of the clues are usable by the players. All clues have to be presented to the authorities for analysis."

"At least the author provides a debriefing section that tells you what was found out about the bases from your work."

"Right, Sparky, but take a close look at the debriefing section. The seventh clue is a severed alien limb; the most interesting clue is not mentioned in the debriefing. The whole adventure becomes a hopeless treasure hunt."

The demon wrinkled his nose and flipped ***Rogue Moon*** into flaming oblivion. "Enough of this science fiction stuff. What is this ***Restormel,*** Universal Fantasy Supplement? It looks to be more to my liking." He unfolded the mapsheet and raised an eyebrow. "Did Judges Guild do this map? It looks very good, too good to be a graphic production from them."

"Oh, they did it, all right. They have very high standard for maps."

"Why don't they carry those standards over to the other graphics?"

I could only shake my head. "Read the description on Deep Lurkers, the main monsters in there."

" 'They have an armor class of 6 and 3 HD, and can attack up to three times per combat turn; two claws and one bite.' "

"There is no 'armor class' in ***Tunnels and Trolls, The Fantasy Trip, RuneQuest, Stormbringer,*** or most other games. Also, their NPC descriptions omit the attribute Power, which makes the work useless for ***RuneQuest.***"

"Their village is a joke. The tavern doesn't even have a menu or price list," the demon scoffed. "And look at this temple. They use a whole 64 words to describe it. They don't even dedicate one NPC to it, either. The artwork is up to their normal standards."

"True. Now, what does Universal Fantasy Supplement mean to you?"

"For AD&D but we couldn't get the approval? Billing it as universal is not quite ethical. One of my colleagues must be working at Judges Guild." He tossed it over his shoulder. Only the map resisted immolation.

"Why, you have a product approved for AD&D here. You've only played that game once. How can you review a product concerning it?"

"Well, it had one of those pretty Frazetta/Houser covers, so I couldn't resist. The picture is reversed. Besides, ***Portals of Twilight*** doesn't require an expert in AD&D to review. The real worth of a product is determined by how it sets the atmosphere for an adventure, and what sort of characters will be met and dealt with in the adventure.

"In this work, Rudy Kraft does a fine job of setting up atmosphere and all that in the first ten pages. Then the rest of the 44-page booklet is used for charts and tables. No personalities or anything."

"Two of their illustrations are not bad."

"Yeah," I smiled. "The illo on page 16 was first done as an advertisement and later used as a product illo. JG often reruns illustrations. The one on page 26 was first used back in the summer of 1977."

"Why would anyone pay $4.98 for a bunch of charts, tables, and retread art?" the demon murmured as he launched ***Portals of Twilight*** over his shoulder. The light from its flaming demise illuminated the final JG product in the pentacle. "Ah, ***Masters of Mind,*** a psionic rules supplement adaptable to any role-playing system now available. Well, is it?"

"I did up a T&T elf to try the system. Fred had an IQ of 23, so I thought him an apt subject for the rules. Then I tried rolling a total of 90-100 of 5d20. I had to roll that high to get a fully psionic character."

"Unless I missed a decimal point somewhere, the odds against getting a full-powered character are one in ten thousand." The demon rechecked the flaming figures that hovered before him.

"That's about what I came up with. Anyway, I assumed that Fred was full-powered just to try the system out. Then I rolled d100 to determine his psi potential; Fred got a 77. His potential then had to averaged with "all of the attributes that define intelligence" to determine his Psionic Dominance. His PD is 50, which is very good, especially when you remember that all saves in this game are made with d20. He has 125% chance of learning any skill he wants, and his 50 makes him unmatched in psionic combat."

"Obviously, the author assumed that any game this was used with would have more than one attribute governing intelligence. As I recall," the demon went on, "***RuneQuest,*** TFT, T&T, and ***Stormbringer*** all only have one attribute to define brains. Another case of 'any RPG' really meaning D&D."

"The nasty thing is that the editors at JG didn't note that anywhere. Granted one should be wary because of other 'universal' products having that problem; but that in no way excuses the impossible odds. Nor does it excuse the poor organization of this product. Pages 6-35 describe psionic skills and note that each has a psionic energy cost. Not until page 36 is psionic power discussed. The table of contents is absolutely useless here."

The demon flipped the last book over his shoulder. It flamed. "At least that last one was so text heavy that we didn't have to look at their art."

"True. So what am I supposed to do?"

He smiled ruthlessly. "Try writing up this conversation we've had. Get it published."

"No one would ever believe it."

"Do it. People will listen. I cannot believe every gamer is foolish enough or in dire enough straits to have to buy such stuff. These games are supposed to take some imagination, and it takes very little of it to see if you are or are not getting your money's worth. The best you can do is warn them, so do it!"

At the end his voice took on the loud commanding tone it had assumed when he first appeared. He vanished as my landlady pounded on the door. "How many times have I told you to keep those Dungeons and Trolls games quiet!" she yelled. I reassured her as well as I could through the barely-opened door. (It wouldn't do to let her see the pentacle.) Then I returned to my typewriter, and blanched. There were words on the paper.

"Next time a better sacrifice, or I get you evicted."

# Cumulative Game Index Issues 15-49

This is our third cumulative index to game articles and reviews, covering issues 15-49. Our first index, covering only numbers 15-29, appeared in issue 30. The second, covering issues 15-39, appeared in issue 40.

All articles are listed by game. Some listings may refer to more than one article; some articles may appear under more than one listing. Many articles of a general nature are not listed at all. The index is coded:

c = Capsule Review
d = Designer's Article
e = Errata
f = Featured Review
g = Game
m = Mentioned in Game Master
s = Strategy Article
v = Variant
x = Mentioned in Contest or Contest Results

Example: "Pond War g19" means that the game Pond War appeared in TSG issue 19.

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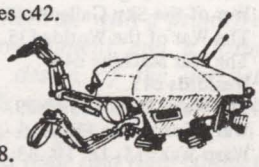

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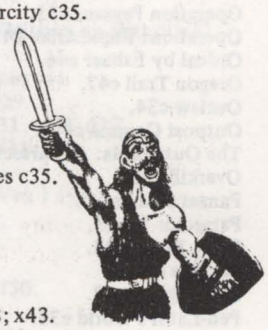

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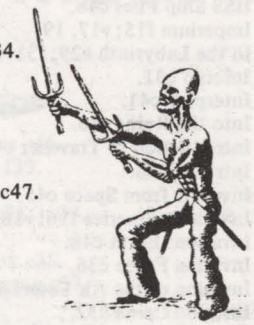

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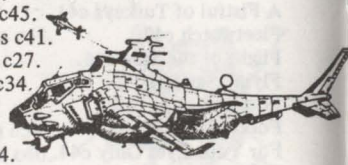
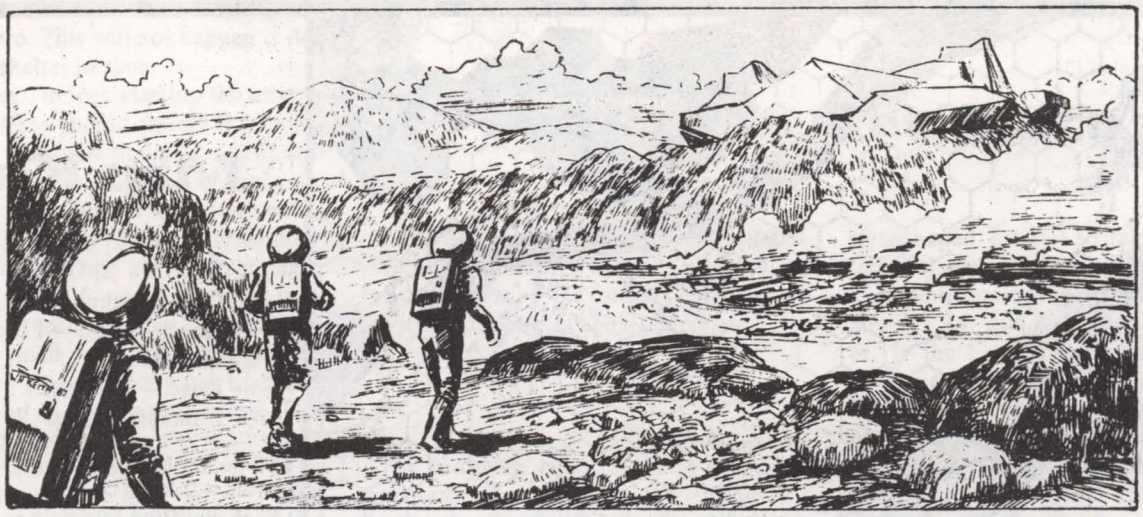




# Periastron

## by J. Andrew & William H. Keith, Jr.

*In "Storm" (February, 1982), adventurers were forced to crash-land when an electrical storm caused severe damage to their ship. They found themselves on a world they christened Storm (E774800), a planet with an eccentric orbit around a young, hot star . . . and, as a result, a planet with turbulent climactic conditions which were growing steadily worse. They had come in search of an alien race whose slower-than-light probe had been discovered in another system, a derelict; the lack of jump drive technology and a complete absence of computers and microelectronics offered a possibility of an enormous market for Caledon Ventures, the company which employed the venturers.*

*What they found, though, were implacably hostile natives, with a primitive technological development and a form unsuited to the design of the derelict probe. The locals were fierce, aggressive . . . and very, very hungry.*

*Having survived their first rude contact with Storm's locals, the adventurers must now consider their next move. For though they thought they had their ship repaired, a new problem has arisen . . . a problem that makes contacting the natives more than a matter of profit. It's now a matter of survival . . .*

*Referee's Notes: Clues in past adventures in this series have introduced the unusual biology of the creatures inhabiting Storm. A reproductive cycle linked to the severe temperature fluctuations of Storm's eccentric orbit makes for a puzzling difference between life forms. Budding, triggered by rising temperatures, produces a number of offspring in each of the individuals exposed. The parent dies, furnishing food for the young. As the comparatively short periastron period comes to an end, the offspring mature and ultimately metamorphose into the long-lived adult forms. Juvenile and adult are completely unlike in appearance, and also in temperament.*

*If this adventure is played as part of an ongoing campaign on Storm, this information should be kept secret until and unless players reason it out. The referee may prefer, however, to reveal the knowledge as a working hypothesis by NPC scientists in the party, especially in games played outside a campaign framework.*

This folio adventure is designed for characters of almost any background attached to a Trade Pioneer Team aboard the Type A2 Far Trader *Scotian Huntress.* The referee may draw characters from any source desired, including existing campaigns. It is urged that characters have some skill in ground combat.

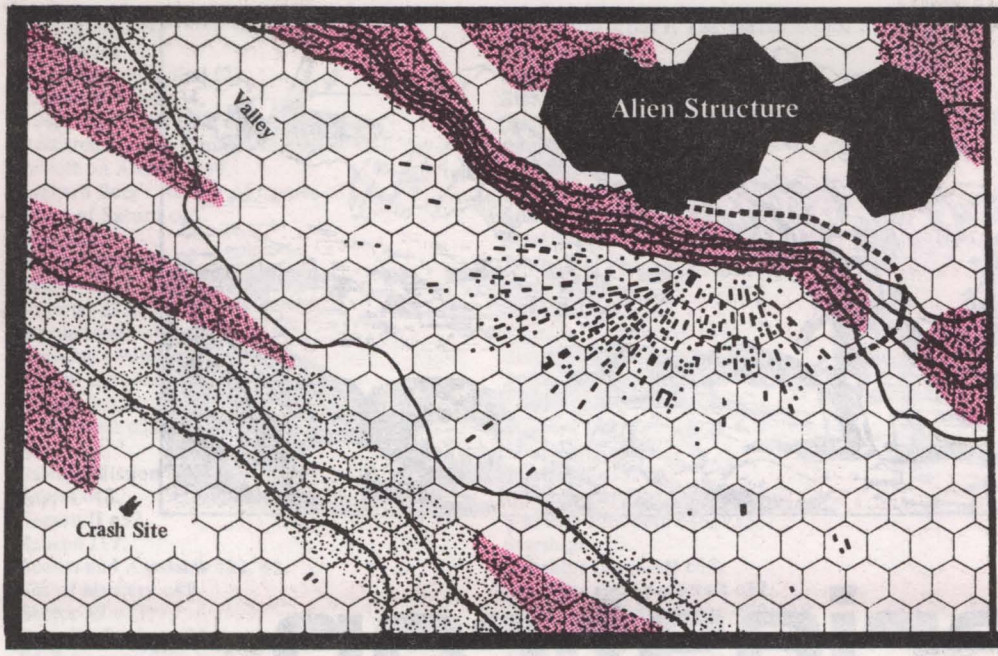
Two scientist non-player characters form a part of the expedition. Character generation information can be found in GDW Supplement 4, ***Citizens of the Imperium.*** Details on the statistics, performance, and layout of the Far Trader are not necessary for this adventure, but they can be found, if desired, in Supplement 7, ***Traders and Gunboats.*** Almost any other ***Traveller*** book, adventure, supplement, or game may enhance the enjoyment of this adventure, as well.

*Background: Scotian Huntress* carried a top-rated Chief Engineer, but even he hadn't been able to catch the problem in time. Lost among the rest of the damage caused during the crash-landing, the failure of several key components in the life support panels remained unnoticed, until a full-power test was run on the ship preparatory to lifting off. Then the sparks and short-circuiting of the critical panel announced the problem in no uncertain terms.

Inertial compensators and internal grav field components could be repaired, and it wasn't long before they were back in working order – at the expense of three of the grav modules from the air/raft. But the atmosphere and temperature regulators were harder to replace, both in terms of parts and time. And, with the damage as it was, time was suddenly a crucial factor.

Internal temperature control was no longer working. The outside temperature was up to 40°C, and still going up, as Storm swung towards periastron. The crew's equipment wasn't designed to support them continuously for more than a short time; as things stood, there was no way they could get the temperature control repairs made in time. Only a single, faint promise of hope existed, unearthed by the team's planetologist.

A little over 30 km away from the ship, on the other side of a ridge and a wide valley, a native city had once stood. Now ravaged by wandering bands of hos-




## Map Key

Open terrain – 1 hex/hr.
Rough terrain – 1 hex/2 hrs.
Impassable
Road – 2 hexes/hr.
Ruined buildings

1 hex = 2 km.
Each elevation line = 25 m. altitude.

tile natives (the juvenile form), the city no longer seemed important. But a structure towered above it, on the sides of a mountain; a brooding structure of uncertain purpose. Analysis made by a scouting party had shown this building to be a tremendous source of heat, and the computer projected a high probability that this structure was actually a large, refrigerated complex. Inside, the computer claimed, the temperature was actually well *under* what the humans thought of as normal – a chilly, but comfortable, 10°C.

It was imperative that the party find a place of refuge against the rising heat. Once that was done, it would be possible to keep vacc suits and other gear in better operating condition, to give the engineer and his helpers a chance to slowly work on the ship. It seemed the only chance for survival was a gambler's throw: visit the strange building, knock on the front door, and hope for a friendly welcome . . .

### Referee's Notes

*Overland trek:* Use of the air/raft has been greatly curtailed by the use of grav modules to repair the ship. It will serve reliably to carry supplies and a pilot, but its capacity for both weight and speed has been reduced. Attempts to fly at more than ¼ speed are subject to a roll for breakdown (7+ each combat round). Atmospheric turbulence can also be a source of danger to persons using the air/raft.

Travel is conducted at the rate of one hex each hour. Each hour, too, the referee should check for native encounters, equipment failures, and other events. See the map and event table.

*Supplies:* The referee may designate the contents of the ship's locker (this should, of course, remain consistent in an ongoing camapign). The adventurers may carry any equipment or supplies they feel they may need. An electronics tool set should be available for repairs to vacc suit air conditioners that may occur during the adventure.

*Conditions:* Vacc suits must be worn, both because of the unpleasant temperature and because of the high ozone content of the atmosphere. Violent storms and other natural phenomena are also a cause of considerable hazard. During storms, forward progress is impossible for 1d hours (during which other events and encounters may take place). Other difficulties may be imposed by the referee by natural hazards as he sees fit.

*Natives:* Native encounters are govered by the event table. Natives are two meters tall, tubular, with four arms and four legs. Generally, they are armed with spears, clubs, torches, rocks, and other random, primitive weapons. They always attack. A total of 1dx10 will be encountered at any given time. They break off and retreat when half or more are killed. If they capture an adventurer, they will attempt to eat him on the spot.

*Equipment failure:* The air/raft is prone to failure at all times; if put under strain, failure is almost certain. Vacc suit air conditioning units are also under an enormous load, and may also fail. Check for air/raft failure every time a hex is entered. A roll of 10+ indicates the air/raft has malfunctioned, and is permanently out of action. In addition, check hourly for air conditioning failure. A roll of 8+ means one unit has failed. Air conditioner repairs take increments of ½ hour, with one throw of 7+ allowed each time. Electronics and mechanical skill may be used as a DM. An electronics kit is necessary to make the repairs.

If the repair is not make within two hours, the character will have one characteristic reduced to 0. Each 15 minutes

## Event Table

*Roll two dice:*

| | |
|---|---|
| 2 | Lightning: Fierce flashes of lightning begin. A character must roll his dexterity or less to take cover, or suffer 8d damage. |
| 3 | Natives: See *Natives* rule. |
| 4 | No event |
| 5 | Storm: See *Conditions.* |
| 6 | Natives |
| 7 | Storm |
| 8 | Lightning hits air/raft: Pilot takes 4d damage immediately. Air/raft crashes on roll of 8+, or if pilot becomes unconscious. |
| 9 | Storm |
| 10 | No event |
| 11 | Natives |
| 12 | Natives |
| 13 | Natives |
| 14 | Natives |
| 15 | Natives |
| 16 | Natives |

DM+4 if party is within three hexes of the Complex Building.

thereafter, another characteristic is reduced to zero. This will not happen if the party finds shelter in time.

*The doors:* Before starting the adventure, the referee should choose five hexes on the map which are designated as doors. These doors occur in building hexes, in low alcoves which appear to be reinforced, and far more sturdy than the remainder of the building. They are 1 meter high, and a small recess 5 cm square is set into each. The "bracelets" from "Flare Star" will fit the small recess, and can be used to open the doors. Additional bracelets may be found in the city; see below. The doors cannot be forced.

Characters will spot a door on 11+ if they pass through the hex, on 6+ if they search it. Additional doors may be located as "Interesting Artifacts;" see below. Every door is connected by a tunnel complex to the alien structure which is the object of the quest. Once a door has been found and opened, the adventure is, in effect, over.

*Searching the city:* One hour will suffice for one team of characters to search a city hex. The party may wish to divide into two or more teams in order to speed

# Useless Artifacts

*Characters who explore the ravaged city will find a large number of artifacts, most broken, some intact but useless. These are examples. The referee may devise others.*

---

A turquoise cube, 5 cm to a side, no apparent lid or opening. Something may be heard to rattle inside.

Metal rod, 9 cm long, 1 cm diameter. One end will glow bright blue if the rod is lifted to a vertical position.

Metal cylinder, .4 m tall, .5 m diameter. Bears alien inscription. Weighs 200 kg. Top may be removed easily. Contains a viscous, plastic substance.

Statuette of a disc-shaped alien, 3 cm in diameter, composed of a shiny ferric alloy. Appears to be holding a largish, cigar-shaped artifact. Underside bears a trefoil-shaped symbol.

Gizmo, composed of dull, bluish metal, about 2 cm to a side. Bears yellow plunger. If the plunger is depressed, one end of the artifact will become red-hot in a few seconds, remaining hot until the plunger is depressed a second time.

Hollow, translucent sphere, .3 m in diameter. In one place there is a neat, circular hole.

White disk, 1.8 m in diameter, 6 cm high, firmly socketed in floor. A large number of colored plungers cover the radius in three tiers. Playing with the plungers will have no evident effect.

Oval plaque of yellow, plastic-like material, securely fastened to the wall of a ruined building. Bears alien inscription and arrow-like symbol pointing in a random direction.

# Interesting Artifacts

*Roll two dice:*

2. *A vehicle.* This is an alien ground car, apparently undamaged. It will hold up to four disc-shaped aliens (or a similar number of humans), and is capable of cross-country speeds of 20 km/hr (half in rough terrain). Needless to say, the controls are very strange. It will take at least an hour to figure the thing out and get it moving. Check for each attempt hourly; a roll of 10+ indicates success. Applicable modifiers include Mechanic and Wheeled Vehicle. The car has enough fuel for 2d6 hours; once fuel is gone the party will not be able to find more.

3. *Hand laser.* This weapon can be recognized from "Flare Star." On 6+, it is charged and operable.

4. *Map.* This is a detailed map of the city, annotated with alien text. Green symbols mark the positions of tunnel entrances. A green line indicates tunnels. Most green lines lead to the alien structure.

5. *Locker.* What the players see is a metal plate in the wall, about 1 m high and 2 m wide. Inspection will reveal the presence of hinges and a lock. The lock must be shot off to be removed. The interior space is about 4 m deep. Animal parts and pieces of vegetation are stacked neatly around the walls. The temperature is 5 degrees C. Throwing food will distract hungry natives for 2-12 rounds, allowing the characters to escape, if they think of trying it. In addition, the locker may be used as a refuge in the event of suit air conditioner failure.

6. *Bracelet.* This is a key, recognizable from "Flare Star." It may be used to open a tunnel door.

7. *Intact building.* The characters may barricade themselves here if attacked by natives. "Storm" furnishes an example of alien architecture. 10% of buildings contain lockers.

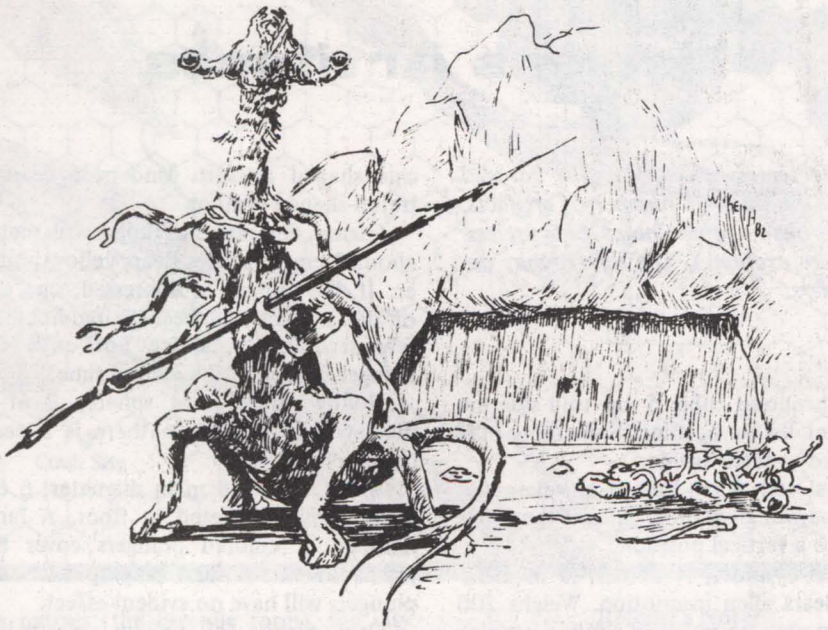
8. *Metal door.* This is an entrance to the tunnel complex. It is described in more detail above.

9. *Ruined building.* This structure is of more than usual interest, since there are many pictures on the surviving walls. Small statues or models may be found among the rubble. This place was once a school or museum. After an hour's study, the characters would come to understand the aliens' life-cycle, and would learn that the alien structure is a place of sanctuary, probably inhabited.

10. *Box with plungers (1).* This "black box" is an alien recording machine. Playing with the plungers will, on 8+, produce a loud babble which will attract 2d6 hostile natives.

11. *Box with plungers (2).* This is an alien fuel cell, which depends on strict chemical balance for operation. Playing with the plungers will cause a yellow panel light to burn. Two minutes later, the yellow light will start flashing, and a loud, keening noise will start. In 30 seconds, it will explode, doing 5d damage to everyone within 5 meters, and 2d to everyone within 10 m.

12. *Box with plungers (3).* Comm unit. On first use, it will behave as Box 1, but with the addition of a bright, confusing visual program. Repeated use will, on 10+, open a channel to the alien structure. A disc-shaped alien will appear on the screen. The box will make babbling noises, perhaps additionally repeating statements made by the characters, but in a strange, distorted way, In 1d6 x 10 minutes, an air/raft of alien design will appear overhead and land as near as possible to the comm unit. A door will open. There is nothing inside but a number of disc-shaped seats. The controls are locked, and the whole thing is under remote control. If the characters enter, they will be taken to the alien structure. (End of adventure.) If they fire on the air/raft, the aliens will decide that they are hostile, and refuse them entrance under any circumstances.



their searching. However, this will make them more vulnerable to native attacks.

Every search will result in the uncovery of one "Interesting Artifact" and 1d3 "Useless Artifacts." Some of these will be helpful; some will be time wasters. Regardless of their immediate usefulness, they may prove valuable if brought back to a human-occupied world. After the adventure, roll two dice for each artifact. A 2 or 3 means that it is essentially worthless. 4-10 means it will bring a 1d6K credit bonus from Caledon Ventures. On an 11 or 12, the artifact is worth 1d6 x 10K credits. A second identical artifact will bring no additional bonus.

*The adventure:* Characters who try to reach the alien structure directly will find it almost impossible. It is surrounded by a mob of natives who are attracted to it by instinct. Moreover, no entrance is obvious from the outside, and the walls are impervious to anything the characters might use. Only parties who find a door have much chance of surviving the adventure.

Within the complex, the adventurers will finally meet the aliens they have been seeking, the mature form of the tubular natives who have been so dangerous. These are disc-like beings, a meter and a half across, with a civilized and peaceful nature, and a technically sophisticated culture. They will be friendly; once communications are established and a common language worked out, they can not only help the adventurers survive, but prove a lucrative source of trade for Caledon Ventures, giving the party a fat bonus to look forward to on returning to civilization.

Referees may prefer to await the publication of the last of this series of adventures on Storm, which will show some of the practical difficulties of setting up relations with this race.

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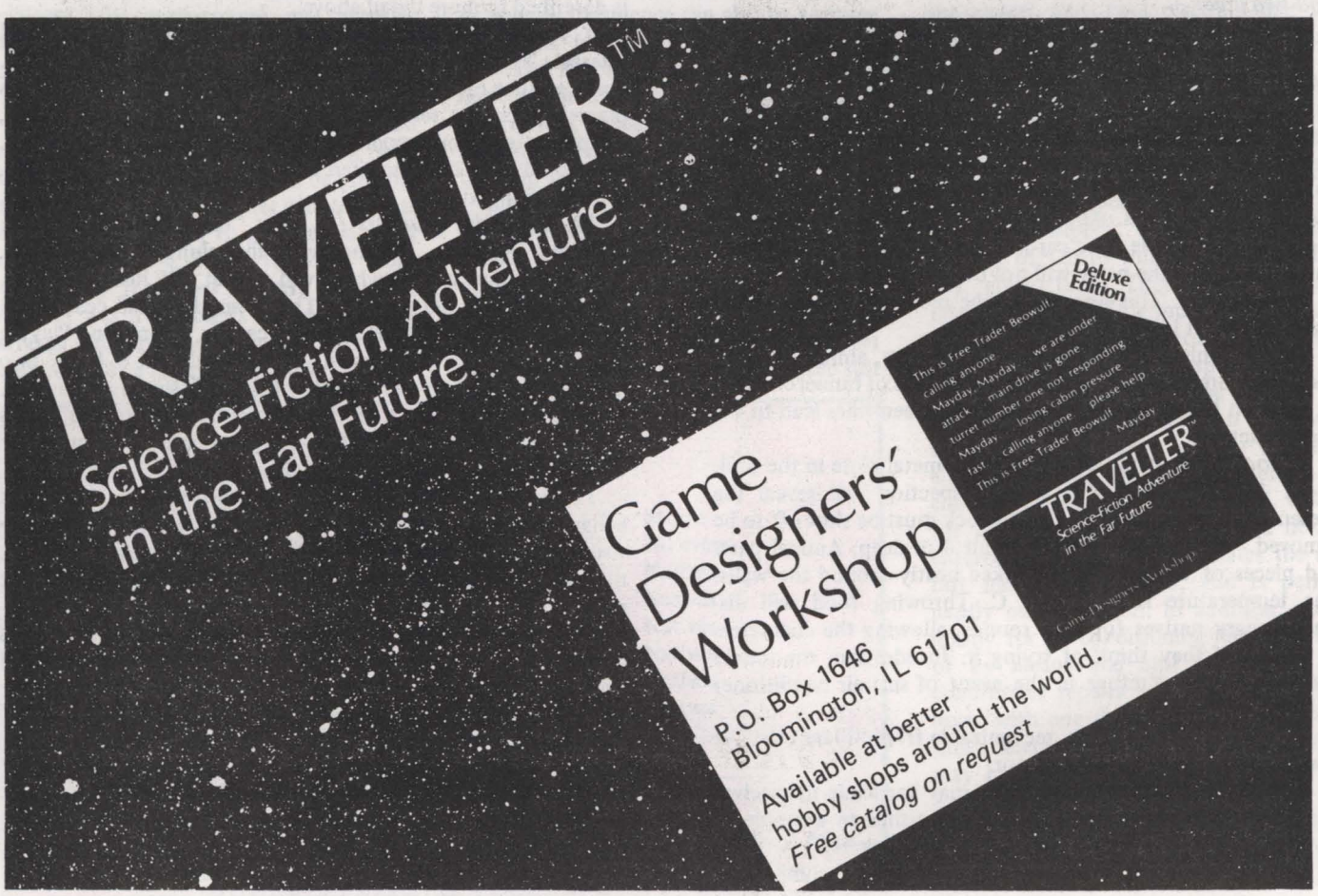
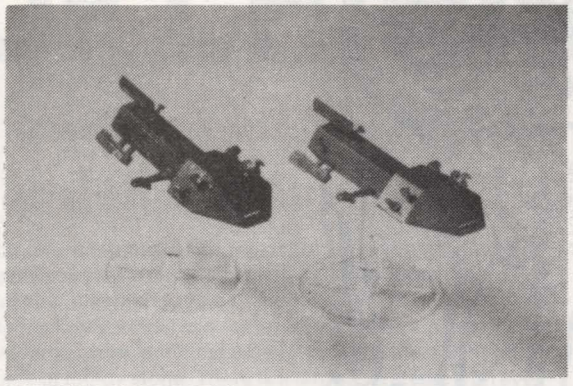
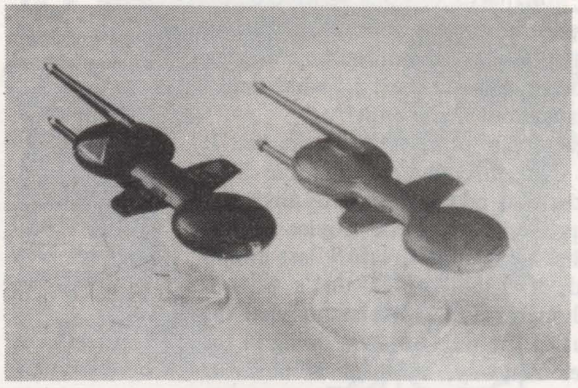


# STAR FLEET BATTLES MINIATURES

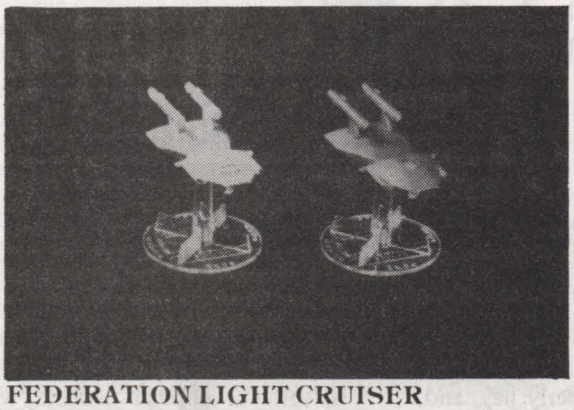
## STARLINE 2200



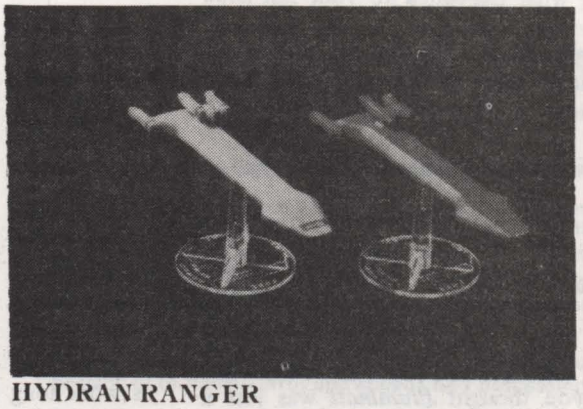
KZINTI CARRIER



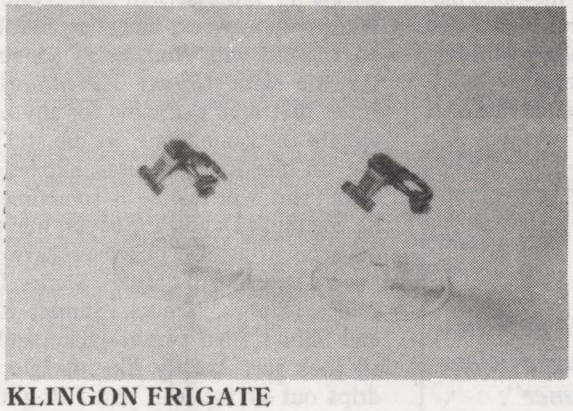
GORN HEAVY CRUISER



FEDERATION LIGHT CRUISER



HYDRAN RANGER



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# WE'RE REAL GONE

Oh, goodness me. Time again to churn out a page of dreary, self-indulgent drool to fill up the space we couldn't sell for advertising. Let me see . . . what shall I complain about this month?

I guess our printers head the list. It seems that, through one of those little mistakes that could happen to anybody, they printed up 12,000 copies of the Shanghai telephone directory last month instead of TSG. I think that's what it was, though I don't understand what the foldout of the wart-hog was doing in the middle. Anyway, business is business, and if any of you subscribers were wondering what happened to your last issue – if you think you've got problems, what about all those poor Chinese? We've subtracted three issues from all your subscriptions to make up for our lost profit.

**Meaningless Subhead to Fill Space**

Our plot to take over the entire gaming world continues. Since last month, we have bought out Simulated Publications, *Dragging* magazine, and the New York Times. (They didn't have much to do with gaming, but they were cheap.) And you thought *Illuminati* was just a game. Hee, hee.

**See Previous Subhead**

Please help us. We're the staff of SJ Games. Steve keeps us here and makes us work long hours for miserly pay, and makes fun of us, and keeps the Coke machine at 65 cents, and stares into space for hours at a time, giggling at nothing. We're putting this here because we know the one thing he never reads is his own column. Help us, please!

In spite of popular demand, we will release 17 more sets of our "Pasteboard Wimps" next week, including four licensed for use with ***Rudequest***, six suitable for use with ***Grungy Adventures***, and three that aren't suitable for anything at all. On the game front, we are still working on the long-promised expansion to ***Ogre***, and will release it sometime after St. Swithin's Day in 1986. Our miniatures department is also busy; we have developed a new line of "Molds, Slimes, Globs, Jellies, Slimes, Smuts, Slimes, Slimes, and Slimes." No two are alike, and they all look just exactly like the glop that drips out of the lead pot. J.R. got a big bonus for that idea . . .

**Two-Line Subhead for Graphic Effect**

That's about it for this month. I just heard a scream from the back room; either Norman fell into the lead pot again or somebody has shrink-wrapped the cat. Bye-bye. Send me all your money.

*–Evil Stevie*

## Not in Next Issue

***The next issue of TSG will definitely NOT include the following articles:***

***"I'm OK – You're a Wargamer";***

***Excerpts from the Journal of Non-Player Characters;***

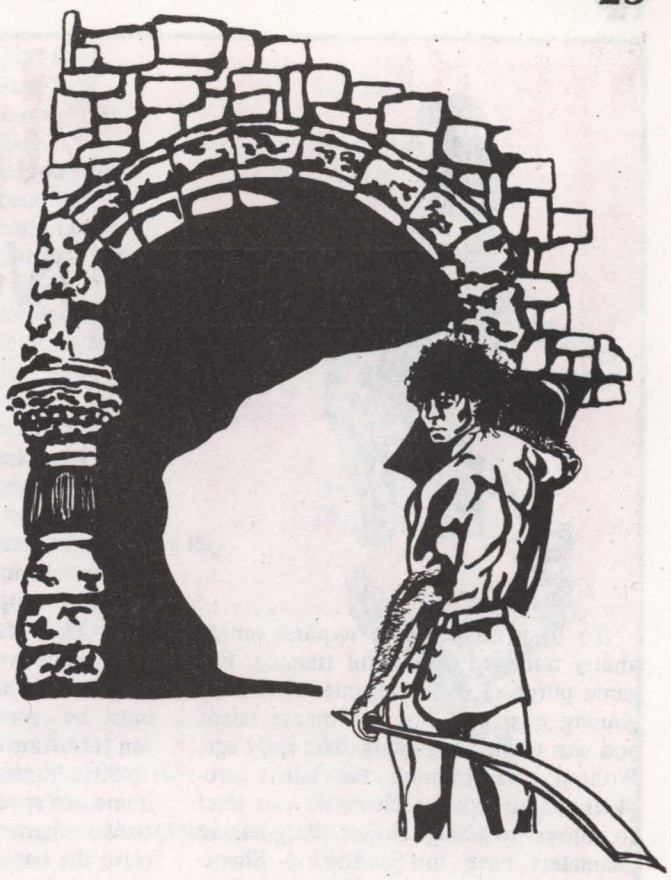
***"What is That Thing You're Eating?" – a set of sack lunch generation tables for TFT/D&D;***

***Combining CALL OF CTHULHU with G.E.V.;***

***Magic in CAR WARS; and***

***A solitaire scenario for KILLER!***

# CATACOMBS OF CHAOS



You, Moraden, leader of a party of six brave adventurers, step through the north portal of your safe room. There is a blaze of shimmering light. The next instant you and your friends find yourself in another room. As your party enters this large, grim, dank catacomb, they see the north wall is made of moldy stone. There is a large iron statue with eyes made of red gems. Suddenly from behind the statue leaps an awful ghoul! As one, your group draws their swords to battle . . . for glory and riches in the CATACOMBS OF CHAOS.

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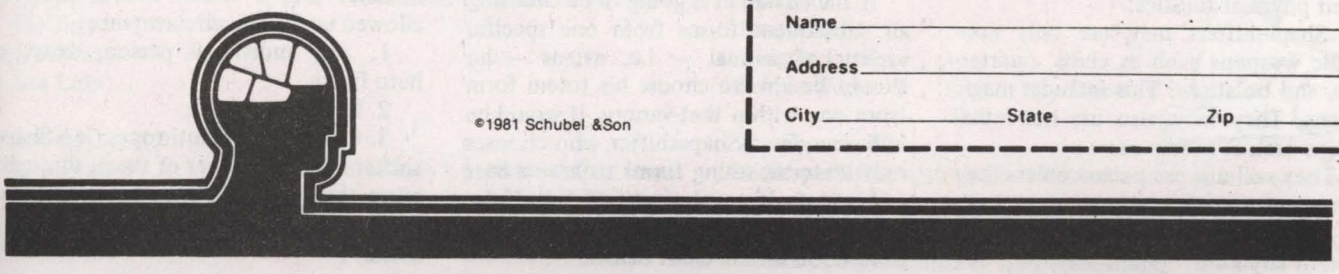

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# Shapeshifters

## New Class for D&D

### by Ronald & Kevin Pehr

To be a Shapeshifter requires innate ability nurtured by careful training. For game purposes, it is presumed that a beginning character has the innate talent and was trained beginning at an early age. Without such training, the talent atrophies, so no existing character can elect to convert to a Shapeshifter. Only human characters have this ability. A Shapeshifter must have an intelligence of 8 or more, a constitution of 15+, and a dexterity of 12+.

The training is obtained from the druids. A beginning Shapeshifter is presumed to have grown up under the tutelage of the druids, and will have the appropriate philosophical leanings. He must have an alignment in the neutral range – NG, NN, or NE.

The training consists of special study of animals, coupled with mental exercises akin to learning magic spells. However, the process is different enough that Shapeshifters cannot learn any sort of spells and no other character class can learn their type of shapeshifting.

Being druids in spirit, Shapeshifters gain experience levels in the same manner. They use one six-sided die per level for hit points. Beyond 14th level they may acquire additional levels at a cost of 1,000,000 experience points each, gaining 2 hit points per level.

The mental discipline necessary to be a Shapeshifter affects use of weapons or armor in human form, as well as certain of their physical abilities:

1. Shapeshifters may use only non-metallic weapons such as clubs, quarterstaves, and bo sticks. This includes magic weapons. They may also use non-lethal weapons such as a lasso or net.

2. They will not use poison unless they are in the form of a venomous creature. They are +1 on saving throws against poison of any kind.

3. They have keen senses. They can hear on a percentile roll of 20% or less, no matter what form they take. Their keen sight, hearing, and smell allows them to function in the dark as effectively as half-elves using infravision.

4. They cannot change into animal form while wearing anything other than simple cloth garments. Armor of any type must be removed before a Shapeshifter can transform.

5. In human form, they may use magic items not specifically reserved to any particular character class. They would receive the benefits or penalties of a book, potion, or anything else that has an instant effect as if they were druids.

Shapeshifters can, at Level 1, speak Common, their alignment tongue, the druidic language, and the language (if any) of their totem animal (explained later). Beginning at level 3, they can gain one language per level from the list for druids (***Player's Handbook***, page 21) plus any the DM deems appropriate.

**Animal Forms**

At the commencement of the game, a Shapeshifter will know a number of animal forms equal to one-quarter his intelligence, rounded up, plus his "totem" form.

Each Shapeshifter has one form which comes naturally to him; this is referred to as his totem form. He can enter this form any number of times per day and maintain it all day, if need be. (Other shapes have a duration of 1 turn/shapeshifter level.) He can also speak the tongue of the animal form. When the character is first created he should choose or roll for his totem form.

If the character is going to be choosing all subsequent forms from one specific variety of animal – i.e. avians – he should be able to choose his totem form from one within that variety. It would be ludicrous for a Shapeshifter who chooses only waterbreathing forms to have a bear as his totem form due to a die roll. If the Shapeshifter is not going to specialize, he should roll on the chart below.

| *% Roll* | *Animal Form** |
|---|---|
| 01-10 | Baboon, monkey, etc. |
| 11-20 | Rat, squirrel, bat, etc. |
| 21-35 | Small bird |
| 36-45 | Horse, mule, stag, goat, ram, etc. |
| 46-60 | Small canine (dog, jackal, fox, etc.) |
| 61-70 | Larger canine (wolf, mastiff, hyena, etc.) |
| 71-80 | Jaguar, leopard, cougar, etc. |
| 81-90 | Large bird (hawk, eagle, etc.) |
| 91-95 | Lion, tiger, etc. |
| 96-00 | Giant eagle, giant owl, etc. |

*Choose one form from the options given on the line indicated by the die roll.

The DM, of course, is always free to allow or disallow forms as he pleases.

Each animal form has a minimum intelligence requirement. This reflects, not how smart the animal is, but how difficult its form is to duplicate. If a Shapeshifter does not have the minimum intelligence necessary, he cannot elect to know that animal form. With each experience level gain, a Shapeshifter may choose one new animal form. For this purpose only, his intelligence may be presumed one point higher per two levels above first. An intelligence 12 Shapeshifter of Level 1 starts out with five animals, none of which has a minimum requirement over 12; at Level 2 the Shapeshifter learns one more animal which may have a minimum requirement up to 12; at Level 3 the Shapeshifter may learn one more, with a minimum requirement up to 13, etc.

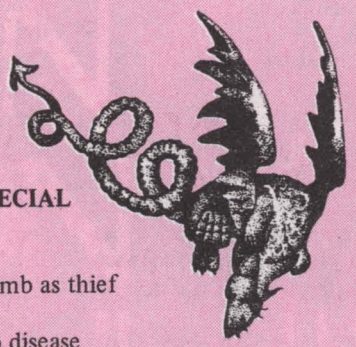
Intelligence requirements for different animals from the AD&D ***Monster Manual*** appear on the Shapes Table. These can be altered at the discretion of the dungeon master. There are some types of monster shapes which should never be allowed under any circumstance:

1. Any individual person, deity, or hero figure

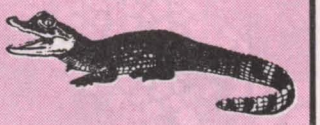
2. Demons or devils

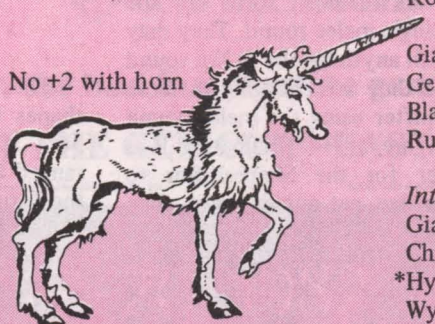
3. Undead or lycanthropes (if a Shapeshifter becomes either of these, through a curse, being bitten, etc., he cannot perform as a Shapeshifter until the curse is lifted)

# Shapes



| ANIMAL | SPECIAL |
|---|---|
| *Intelligence 8* | |
| *Baboon/Monkey | Climb as thief |
| *Gorilla/Great Ape | |
| *Rat/Squirrel/etc. | No disease |
| Bat | Sonar is equiv. to Infravision |
| *Small Bird | |
| *Horse/Stag/Goat/Ram/Mule | |
| *Small Canine (Dog, Jackal, etc.) | |
| *Beaver/Otter | Not giant |
| Porcupine, giant | |
| *Intelligence 9* | |
| Giant Ant | Walk on walls, Poison A |
| *Barracuda & smaller fish | |
| *Camel | |
| *Large Canine (Wolf, Hyena) | |
| *Flightless birds | |
| *Boar/Bull/Buffalo | |
| *Jaguar/Leopard/Cougar | |
| Piercer | Damage is 3 dice (3-18) |
| Centaur | |
| *Intelligence 10* | |
| Giant Weasel | |
| Constrictor Snake | |
| Lynx | No special detect traps bonus |
| *Lion/Tiger | |
| *Bear, black or brown | |
| *Giant Eagle/Owl | |
| *Gar/Pike/Shark | "Swoop" equivalent |
| Wolverine | |
| Hippocamus | |
| Stirge | |
| Pegasus | |
| Unicorn | No +2 with horn |
| Minotaur | |
| Dire Wolf | |
| *Intelligence 11* | |
| Cave Bear | |
| *Balucatherium/Hippopotamus | |
| *Crocodilian/Giant Lizard | |
| Rhino | |
| Giant Eel | |
| Hippogriff | |
| Gargoyle | *Not* immune to normal weapons |
| Griffin | |
| OwlBear | |
| Sea Lion | |
| *Intelligence 12* | |
| Hell Hound | Breath is 1 pt/shapeshifter level |
| Wolf, winter | Breath is 1 pt/shapeshifter level |
| Harpy | No charm |
| Centipede | Poison A |
| Giant Frog | |
| Giant Tick | No disease |
| Lamprey, giant | |
| Leech | No disease |
| *Octopus/Squid | Not giant |
| Giant Turtle | |
| Carrion Crawler | |
| *Minotaur Lizard/Crocodile, Giant | |
| *Intelligence 13* | |
| *Elephant/Mastodon/Mammoth | |
| Killer Frog | |
| Bulette | |
| Leucrotta | |
| Ankheg | |
| *Poison Frog/Toad | Poison B, +4 to save |
| Weed Eel | Poison B |
| Electric Eel/Manta Ray | |
| Giant Skunk | |
| *Giant Octopus/Squid | |
| Giant Snapping Turtle | |
| *Intelligence 14* | |
| Roc | |
| Giant Spider | Poison B |
| *Sting Ray/Punji Ray | Poison B |
| Giant Wasp | Poison B |
| Portuguese Man-O-War, Giant | Poison B + paralyze |
| *Naga | Poison B |
| Otyugh | No disease |
| Remorhaz | |
| Displacer Beast | |
| Gray Ooze | Not impervious to spells, cold, heat |
| Lurker Above | |
| Trapper | |
| *Intelligence 15* | |
| Manticore | Spikes are Poison C, Swoop |
| *Sphynx | Swoop |
| Umber Hulk | |
| Dragonne | |
| Roper | Full effect from lightning & cold |
| Giant Slug | Acid as Poison C |
| Gelatinous Cube | Full effects from all attacks |
| Black Pudding | Full effects from all attacks |
| Rust Monster | |
| *Intelligence 16* | |
| Giant Scorpion | Poison C |
| Chimera | |
| *Hydra/Pyrohydra | Non-regenerating |
| Wyvern | Poison C |
| *Intelligence 17* | |
| *Dinosaur | |
| *Dragon | |
| Dragon Turtle | |
| Purple Worm | Poison C |
| *Intelligence 18* | |
| *A Shapeshifter with this intelligence can appear as an average individual for any humanoid species. | |





*Each Species counts as a separate shape.

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4. Any creature which has the ability to shape-change itself (e.g., dopplegangers, mimics).

### Limitations

In essence, when a Shapeshifter takes on an animal form, the following rules apply:

1. He can fight using the creature's normal attack modes (example: If he turns into a jaguar, he would attack twice for 1-3 each and once for 1-8, as a normal jaguar).

2. He retains his own hit points. If he is injured in animal form, the injury carries over into what ever subsequent form he takes until it is healed.

3. He attacks as a creature of his experience level. Although a jaguar is a 4+1 die monster, a first-level Shapeshifter in jaguar form will strike as a one-die creature. When fighting in human form, he uses the druid combat matrix; when in animal form, he uses the monster matrix at the same level.

4. He makes all saving throws as a druid of his level.

5. Bonuses and penalties for high or low strength apply in human form only.

6. He has the armor class of the animal he is emulating (at the DM's discretion, in special cases).

7. He gains none of the special immunities of the creature – i.e., immune to normal weapons, to lightning, to fire, etc.

8. He cannot cast spells, even if spell-casting is an integral part of the creature's activities.

### Notes on Combat

Shapeshifters change form in the course of a single melee round. They may not accomplish anything else in the round during which they are changing. Attacks on a Shapeshifter using the melee round to transform are at +4 (indicating it is usually wiser for the Shapeshifter to break off a melee, get out of range, then change).

If a Shapeshifter is attacked while transforming, initiative determines if he is hit while in the old or new form. If the Shapeshifter has the initiative, he is hit in the new form; otherwise he is in the old form. If the Shapeshifter's animal form has certain advantages/disadvantages on an initiative roll, they are ignored for this purpose.

An aerial creature may swoop against a grounded foe. He must declare a swoop before rolling for initiative. If the flier has initiative, he swoops, strikes, and flies upward without being struck in return, but does only ½ damage if the strike is successful. It normally requires a melee round to recover from a swoop and turn about in the air for another; however, if the flier has a dexterity of 16 or greater, he may swoop and recover in the same round, allowing a swoop the following round. Fliers meleeing against other fliers use AD&D rules; fliers who swoop on a grounded foe without having initiative are vulnerable to a return strike by the foe. If a flier receives more than ¼ its total hit points in damage at once, it falls a minimum of 60 feet before recovering and levelling off.

### Poison, Etc.

Because of the overwhelming effect of poison in AD&D (miss the saving throw, you die), player-characters rarely have access to it, and it would be unfair to other characters if a Shapeshifter could casually assume the form of a venomous animal in order to kill with a single strike. Thus, Shapeshifters using poison while in animal form use a special rule: They use special poison classes from the ***DM's Guide*** (see page 20 of that volume). On the creature chart below, each poison type is followed by a letter. Shapeshifter poisons fall in classes A, B, or C of the insinuative variety in the ***DM's Guide.*** In addition, one full turn must be spent between uses of the poison, so that it may replenish itself.

Animals using various chemical or acid attack forms can be treated as if using poison. This is reflected on the creature table.

Shapeshifters in the form of creatures which may carry diseases (rats, ticks) do not transmit these diseases.

### Shapes Table

The table on page 27 lists many of the shapes to which the Shapeshifter would have access. The creature types are arranged by the intelligence needed to learn the form. In several cases, many creatures will be listed on one line, such as "Boar/Bull/Buffalo." That does not mean that that line counts as one shape choice; each one of these creature types is a separate form, but they are listed together on the chart due to similarity of form or species.

Also listed are some special attributes of the creature shapes. In general, a Shapeshifter will be able to use the abilities of the creature he imitates, but not always; notations on the chart show the limitations.

***Duel Arcane,*** a combat system of shapeshifting wizards, was the inspiration for this article.

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Games for which reviews have been assigned or received include: ***Adventures in High Fantasy, The Arduin Adventure, The Book of Mars, Broadsword, The Chamax Plague/Horde, Dragon's Hall, Duel Magical, Fantastic Personalities, F'deck Fo's Tomb, Glory Hole Dwarven Mine, The Illhiedrin Book, Interstellar Skirmishes, Mistywood, The Phantastical Phantasmagorical Montie Haul Dungeon, Portals of Irontooth, Power Play, Sorcerer of Siva, Striker, Vault of Ni'erqneyon, Wizard's Realm, World Builders, Worlds of Wonder, Wraith Overlord,*** and ***Zienteck.***

Games for which we are currently seeking reviewers include: ***Asteroid Pirates, Demon's Run, Grand Master, Space Ace 21.***

# Capsule Reviews

INTRODUCTION TO ADVENTURE GAMING (SPI); $1.00. Booklet with three introductory games. Published 1981.

***The Creatures that Ate New York***: Designed by Redmond Simonsen and Justin Leites. 16½" x 11" map. 34 die-cut backprinted counters, two 8¼" x 11" pages of rules. Two to four players; playing time 15 minutes. Each player randomly picks a monster (from green slime to giant robot, varying in combat strength, movement, good or evil, and whether or not they can fly) and a mission (finding a blonde, attacking other monsters, or eating 257 Park Avenue South). Fake blonde markers are scattered across the map – one is the real blonde, while others provide semi-humorous encounters with rush hour traffic and ABC News. The game, although easy to learn, has a huge flaw – it is extremely unbalanced. Some missions are much easier than others, while monsters without a blonde-related mission get to avoid most of the potential NY hazards.

***Napoleon at Waterloo***: Designed by James F. Dunnigan. 16½" x 11" map, 60 die-cut counters, five 8¼" x 11" pages of rules. Two players; playing time 90 minutes. This is the famous battle of Waterloo, pitting Napoleon's troops against the forces of Wellington and Blucher. The rules carefully expose new gamers to such wonders as zones of control, artillery bombardment, and odds-ratio combat. To win, the French must demoralize their enemies and escape into Belgium; the Allies win by inflicting 40 points of damage on the French without taking 40 points themselves. The game, although not quite filled with heart-stopping excitement, is an excellent introduction to the hobby. This edition includes a rewritten historical narrative, and lacks the Grouchy Variant.

***The Tower of Azann***: Designed by Bob Ryer, Justin Leites, Gerald Klug, and Redmond Simonsen. Two 8¼" x 11" pages of rules, two pages of programmed instructions. One or more players; playing time 30 minutes. You, a wizardly warrior, must enter the Tower and come out with a kidnapped child. Each character has 12 points, split between strength, magic ability, and agility. Combat is simple – if your strength exceeds his agility, the defender loses one point of strength or agility; if less, the attacker loses one point. Characters also know two spells: teleportation, bravery, fireball, or regeneration. The Tower is six stories tall, six rooms per floor, and movement is by die roll. ***Tower*** has three glaring flaws: (1) The rules for bravery are backwards – as it is now, characters get braver as their injuries increase. (2) The combat system is horrible – humans kill goblins automatically, and stronger monsters automatically kill humans. (3) The adventure is senseless. In one case, wraiths will help you, but only if you try to run away from the fight, and regardless of whether you attacked the wraiths or befriended them earlier; elsewhere, a pair of red glowing eyes turn out to be a cave troll, a harmless statue, or an illusion, depending on the character's initial reaction! This game is absolute garbage.

What good is an introductory game that is all introductory and no game? ***Tower*** is enough to discourage any novice fantasy gamer, while ***Creatures*** is hardly an endorsement for science fiction gaming. Only ***Napoleon at Waterloo*** is both a decent game and an introduction to gaming. I should also warn you that the "History of Gaming" and the "Hints on Play" promised on the cover aren't to be found inside the booklet! Even so, one of the three games here is perfect for the purpose.

*–W.G. Armintrout*

TRAILBLAZER (Metagaming); $3.95. Designed by Greg Costikyan. 32-page rules booklet, 12" x 14" map, 126 counters and 2 tiny

## *WRITING REVIEWS FOR THE SPACE GAMER*

### Capsule Reviews

Most of the reviews we print will be "capsule" reviews – 400 words or less. We pay $5 for each capsule review accepted. We want to run a review for *every* new SF or fantasy game or supplement.

Each capsule review should be five paragraphs long and contain:

(1) Basic information. Present these facts, in this order: NAME OF GAME (Publisher); price. Designer. (If applicable: "Supplement to ---," "Companion to ---," or similar note.) Format: list of components, with sizes of maps and rulebooks, number of counters, etc. Number of players; playing time. Publication date.

(2) General description of the game: background, the sides, course of play, special features, etc.

(3) Strong points. Discuss what is good about the game; in every game, there IS something worthwhile. "Fun" is a useless adjective. Be specific.

(4) Weak points. Every game has its problems, too. If the only faults you can find are minor ones, say so. If the game is fatally flawed, come right out and SAY SO. If you can phrase your criticisms as suggestions for improvement, do so.

(5) Summation. Your overall opinion of the game. Who should and should not buy it, and why. Is the game worth its price?

All reviews must be signed; the reviewer's name *will* be printed. No game may be reviewed by its designer, by a playtester, or by an employee of the publisher. (Designer's articles are welcome, but must be billed as such!) Final note: If you can write a complete review in less than the full 400 words, by all means do so.

This review format is designed to encourage fairness and to give the reader enough information to let him decide whether he wants to buy that game. Keep that in mind when you write. This is a short review, *not* a complete analysis. For those who want to write longer reviews, each issue will have one or two –

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These will be game reviews 1,000 to 2,000 words long. They should contain *all the above information,* plus whatever else the reviewer wants to say. They may be written in any format. A featured review may cover either a new game or one that has been on the market for some time. If TSG has not already printed a capsule review, write one and submit it at the same time. We may even use both.

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dice, boxed. For two to four players; playing time indefinite. Published 1981.

TRAILBLAZER simulates space exploration and economic exploitation by two to four Sol-based trading companies (with the general flavor of Poul Anderson's Nicholas Van Rijn stories). It is largely a paper and pencil game, requiring extensive record-keeping. Players compete for goods at those worlds where they have ships or offices, then transport their purchases to worlds where they are marketable. Prices fluctuate from world to world and from turn to turn based on supply and demand. Players have the opportunity to explore beyond "Known Space" in hopes of discovering new star systems (and therefore new markets), as well as valuable, earth-like uninhabited worlds. Play ends after a mutually-agreed-upon number of turns. The wealthiest player in terms of ships, inventory, and cash-on-hand, is the winner.

TRAILBLAZER manages to treat a complex subject in a realistic and playable manner. The few typos and glitches in the rules do not cause any playability problems. The map is not very impressive, consisting merely of five stars on a square grid. Only two types of ships are available, scouts and transports, neither of which is armed. There is no combat. A lot of die rolling is required to simulate fluctuations in supply and demand. All of the necessary charts and tables are incorporated into the rules booklet, requiring a lot of page flipping and rotating of the booklet. The record sheets are awful, being perhaps slightly superior to a piece of blank paper.

Considering the time involved and the effort required, I would expect to find in TRAILBLAZER some of the panoramic sweep of ***Stellar Conquest.*** It just isn't there. Lacking armed conflict, technological development, and the scope to develop really grand strategies, TRAILBLAZER boils down to a game of shuttling consumer goods from world to world, turn after turn. If you're allergic to record-keeping, shy away from this one. If you like expanding on existing games, it may be possible to use this one as an economic phase in games like ***Stellar Conquest.***

*–Robert C. Kirk*

## SUPPLEMENTS

AMAZON MUTUAL WANTS YOU (Dragon Tree); $6.00. Designed by Ben Ezell, Tom Lowrie, Sean Broomell, and "the Graf Posvalski." Play aid for FRP games. Booklet of 30 letter-sized pages. Published 1982.

The four adventures herein are based on the same premise: the player-characters are hired by "Amazon Mutual Life Insurance" to recover bodies of policyholders. (AMLA's purpose is to recover and resurrect policyholders who don't make it through their current adventure, believe it or not.) The producers hope to make a series of these modules, each adventure emphasizing brains rather than brawn.

One sees the usual Dragon Tree weaknesses of writing and editing – not exactly amateurish, but not really professional, either. The adventures rarely attain the goal of brains over brawn. The first is primarily traps, with some aspects (perfectly frictionless floors all over the second level) hard to believe. The second (underwater) adventure requires all brawn, while the third requires similar hack-and-slash unless the players are quite lucky as well as brainy. (It also uses technological artifacts such as explosives.) The fourth adventure is a good notion requiring a little brainwork, but *much* too long in execution, like a short story padded out to a novel.

Evidently the adventures are intended for a D&D variant system. All are nominally for first to fifth level characters. I wish producers would be more specific about the suitability of their adventures – this range, for example, is much too large. No gang of first levels is likely to survive the second or third adventures.

Virtually all modules from such manufacturers as TSR, Gamelords, and Midkemia are better buys for $6 than AMAZON MUTUAL.

*–Lewis Pulsipher*

BLUE FROG TAVERN (FBI); $3.95. Written by James Wilson. Solitaire adventure for ***Tunnels & Trolls.*** 26-page 8½" x 11" booklet. One player; playing time 30 minutes to an hour. Published 1981.

This adventure is for a single T&T character with a maximum of 15 personal adds. Magic is not allowed, but it will be used against you. Things get going when you stop at a tavern in the forest to slake your thirst. The work features the traditional branches to differing numbered paragraphs as you make decisions and succeed or fail at your tasks. Wandering monsters appear in random encounters and are selected from a table at the back of the booklet. The illustrations, both cover and interior, are by Paul Jaquays.

FBI's solo dungeons grow increasingly literate and interesting. A vein of humor runs through BLUE FROG, which rises at least to the level of the current TV situation comedies. Although combat is often unavoidable, this is not primarily a hack-and-slash experience. Treasure is sometimes acquired through common-sense decision-making; the results, however, are ocasionally a mixed blessing. One outstanding feature: the BLUE FROG TAVERN accommodates female characters!

This adventure is somewhat shorter than

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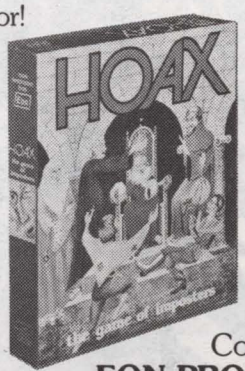


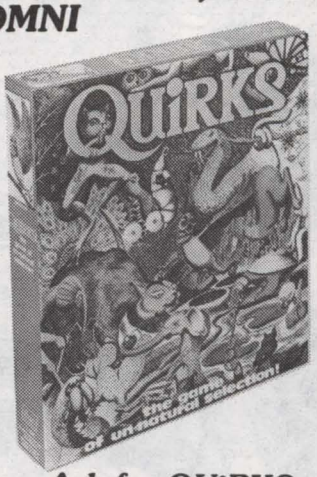


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some and the booklet carries house organ material in the final pages. If you use solos to pump up beginning characters, they'll have a tough time surviving this one; they will need most of those 15 allowable adds to make it through. If they do make it through, they may emerge in a form somewhat different that you might hope. Some encounters route you to earlier solitaire dungeons; if you don't have them, buy or die! Other encounters smack of the sudden death paragraphs in former efforts from FBI.

But come on in and have a beer, anyway, if you are a solitaire T&T freak.

*–Harry White*

HEROIC EXPEDITIONS (Judges Guild); $3.98. Designed by Edward R. G. Mortimer. FRP Supplement. One 8½" x 11" 48-page book. Two or three players; playing time indefinite. Published 1981.

HEROIC EXPEDITIONS presents three separate quests designed for three specific sets of characters. The first two adventures are typical recover-the-lost-artifact fare, but with an interesting twist. In "Spear of Darkness," the player characters are two half-orcs, while the other, "Quest for the Book of Ancestry," centers on a pair of halflings. The third scenario, "Cave of Despair," pits a character from any existing fantasy campaign against his own past. Rather than placing heavy emphasis on fighting and treasure, this adventure takes elements from a character's past, using them to play a vicious trick on the minds of both player and character.

Unfortunately, though, the few good points are far outweighed by HEROIC EXPEDITIONS' many flaws. First, while it purports to be a "Universal Fantasy Supplement," the characters, monsters and magic are so deeply rooted in AD&D that they are virtually useless for other game systems. "Spear" and "Quest" are mindless hack-and-slash adventures, neither one containing enough background on the characters, NPCs, geography or missions to hold the interests of most referees or players. "Cave," the most promising of the three scenarios, starts out excellently, and continues so, until the very end. At that point, the whole quest fizzles into a sick and simple practical joke, in which the character neither gains experience nor risks more than disappointment. And all three quests consist of rigidly ordered series of events, allowing the referee few decisions and the players none.

Any of these three quests *could* have been interesting, were they given more background and published separately in a more complete form. "Cave," the best of the three, can only be described as *almost* clever. For the most part, even novice referees would be better off designing their own quests than using those presented in HEROIC EXPEDITIONS.

*– J. David George*


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LEGEND OF THE SKY RAIDERS (FASA); $6.00. Designed by J. Andrew Keith and William H. Keith, Jr. Approved for *Traveller*. 6" x 9" booklet and 11" x 17" map sheet. 8-9 players; playing time indefinite. Published 1981.

This adventure involves an expedition by a group of down-and-out adventurers into swampy outback territory, in support of a scientific team searching for clues to the legendary "Sky Raiders." The Sky Raiders struck several planets in the area 5,000 years previously, then mysteriously disappeared. A book by a Von Dänikenesque anthropologist suggested Mirayn as the home world of the Raiders. His daughter plans to prove or disprove his theory in the outback where the professor himself disappeared two years earlier. The adventurers must hire guides, equip the expedition, and act as bodyguards for the team against hostile natives, dangerous animals, and a group of smugglers. Along with pregenerated characters for players, the adventure includes some very interesting NPCs, encounter tables for the planet, planetary data, rumors, some new items of equipment, library data, and enough special and detailed information for the referee to run an adventure that truly would, as the dedication reads, make "Indiana Jones . . . feel right at home. . . ."

The details in LEGEND OF THE SKY RAIDERS are extraordinary – nearly everything a referee could conceivably need is provided. The maps of the area, along with Bill Keith's excellent illustrations, add much to the scenario. The secret of the Sky Raiders, such as is revealed in this adventure, both satisfies and builds anticipation for adventures to come.

There are few errors to be found in SKY RAIDERS, and these are all minor typos: a reference page number omitted, a misspelling or transposition here and there. Point of interest 1 on map 4 may be hard to find, but the text description will direct you to it. And map 1, though not numbered, appears to be the planetary map in the book.

LEGEND OF THE SKY RAIDERS is definitely worth adding to your *Traveller* collection and, when run, should prove one of the more exciting adventures your players have yet experienced.

*–William A. Barton*

THE TOWER OF INDOMITABLE CIRCUMSTANCE (Judges Guild); $4.98. Designed by Corey Cole. Adventure for "any FRP system." Booklet of 28 pages of print, 8½" x 11". For either one player and GM or a "party;" playing time 8+ hours. Published 1981.

Though supposedly compatible with any FRP system, this adventure is aimed at D&D clerics and magic-users. It is suited for beginning *characters,* but not for beginning *players;* success requires familiarity with D&D magic spells and items. The adventuring party is invited to explore a black tower with a single entrance (formerly a temple of the demigod Math). Seven encounters provide hack 'n slash, but are mere incidents in the climb to the top. The keys to success and access to each level are found by solving puzzles and finding hidden doors or compartments. One-way doors force the party to move higher, through 38 rooms in 8 levels. The booklet also provides a separate inner-temple adventure which is a natural sequel to success in the tower.

TOWER OF INDOMITABLE CIRCUMSTANCE allows the GM to de-emphasize hack 'n slash. It sticks to an underlying theme, and it is a low-level adventure – a welcome improvement on the usual monster-crowded and inflated-character adventures.

On the other hand, the TOWER inflicts unnecessary irritations:

(1) The maps omit vital secret doors, without which characters have no access to the higher levels. GMs should mark secret doors at rooms 13b, 22 (SW corner), and 23 (S end). Also note that circles in corridors near W1 and U25 evidently mean secret doors.

(2) If one-way doors close behind the party and secret doors are not found, the characters may be trapped forever on the first or second level. That would be a boring end for the party.

(3) Although it is introduced as suitable for "almost any fantasy role-playing game," the booklet is for D&D. Significant magic items and necessary spells have no exact parallel in *RuneQuest* or TFT.

(4) Successful characters may become dual-class magician-priests, which many D&D referees may not want in their campaigns.

GMs who need a change of pace and have experienced players should buy this adventure if they are willing to correct its flaws. It does play smoothly after you fix the maps.

*–Ian L. Straus*

## PLAY AIDS

THE COMPANIONS' HEXAGONAL AND GRID MAPPING SYSTEM: 8½" x 11" (Companions, 245 Water St., Bath, ME 04530); $3.95. Role-playing game aid. Published 1981.

This is a shrink-wrapped package of 50 letter-sized hex sheets, printed one side only, in an 11" x 17" wrap-around folder. There are more than 300 ½" hexes on each sheet; the sheet is also divided, by light gray lines, into two half and two whole large hexes, with 100 small hexes per large hex. According to the manufacturers, the grid was computer-generated, but hand-numbered. The numbering system differs from a typical hex sheet in that a hex in the same relative position within a large hex has the same number, regardless of where it is on the hex sheet as a whole. (Unfortunately, Companions did not cut loose entirely from the old standard system to use numbers 1 through 100, or 00 through 99 instead of four-digit monstrosities. Why require the referee to repetitiously record the extra one or two digits?) The system should facilitate reference when several hex sheets are used to map a large area. The numbers are also offset from the center of each hex, so that they can be read straight across the sheet without resort to up-and-down eye movement typical of standard systems. Finally, the sheets are punched for a three-hole binder.

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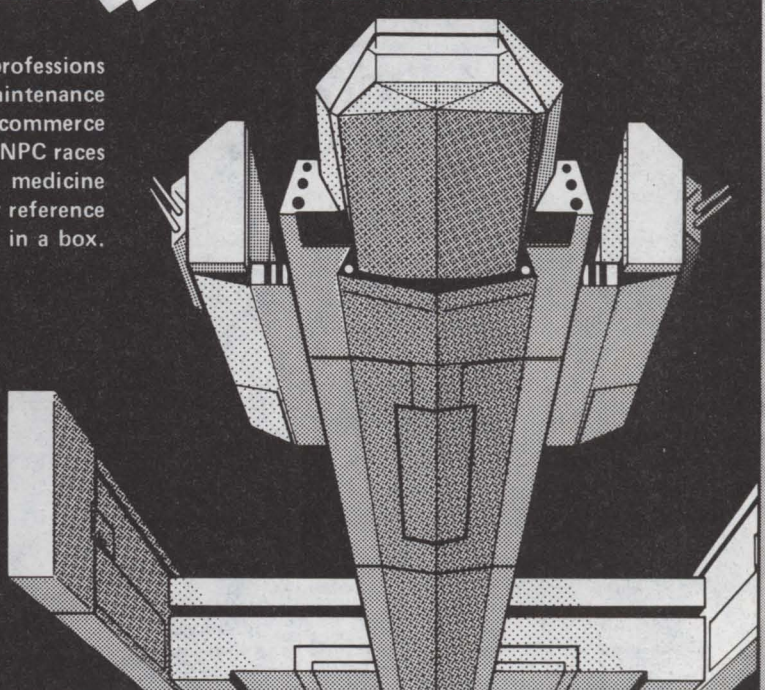

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playing world easier. Referencing within each hex is consistent, and since each large hex has 100 times the area of a small hex it is easy to map areas in greater or lesser detail as desired, by changing the scale in increments of 10. The inner cover helps explain the procedure and suggests some useful scales.

The Companions plan to offer 17" x 22" sheets of similar grids, as well as transparent gridded sheets. The objective is to facilitate superimposition of one map over another for mapping really large areas.

This is an impressive product. If you want to hex-map large areas of a role-playing world, I know of no better aid.

*–Lewis Pulsipher*

SELDON'S COMPENDIUM OF STARCRAFT 1 (FGU); $6. Designed by Edward E. Simbalist and Robert N. Charrette. 8½" x 11" 48-page book. Published 1981.

SELDON'S COMPENDIUM OF STARCRAFT 1 is the newest supplement to FGU's *Space Opera* role-playing system, presenting statistics *a la* the *Ground and Air Equipment* plus deck plans for some 20 starships and five ship's boats (plus a pod shuttle). The stats for all the ships are presented in standard *Space Opera* format and include some comments on the ships, mainly information on cargo and passenger space with a few words on the function and areas of operation of the ships. The plans show the major areas of each ship with identification codes keyed to a table at the front of the book. Also included are detailed drawings and descriptions of the various types of passenger cabins, from high passage down to the cold-sleep tanks. Each ship plan includes the insignia of the corporation that builds the class.

SELDON'S should be a tremendous help

for SO starmasters in need of a ship for players to purchase, rent, or book passage on. The ships presented here can also be used as guides for custom-designing ships of one's own, serving as a much-needed supplement to SO's ship building rules. Many of the ships presented here are quite interesting in their own right, particularly the 12,500-ton *Nemesis* class patrol corvette (which carries four 375-ton *Nike* class patrol cruisers), the *Leviathan* class cargo tug (more than four times bigger than the *Traveller* ship of the same name) and the attendant pod shuttle.

The ships presented here, all merchants or passenger liners except for the two patrol craft, are on the average much bigger than comparable types in *Traveller.* And all, even the liners, are heavily armed (the SO universe must be a dangerous place). Fuel tankage seems rather low, too. But these are design questions within the SO system itself and not really problems with this supplement. It would have been nice if the ships had been printed with a grid so the starmaster could use them to plot movement better in shipboard situations, but a five-meter scale bar provided with each plan helps somewhat on this. A few minor typos and key omissions might cause momentary confusion in a couple of places, but there is nothing serious.

Overall, SELDON'S COMPENDIUM OF STARCRAFT 1 appears to be a well-planned out aid for *Space Opera* and should prove quite useful to players and starmasters alike. I look forward to future editions which will add to the ship types available, perhaps focusing on military ships as well as other civilian types.

*–William A. Barton*

## COMPUTER GAMES

THE IMPERIAL DATA RECOVERY SYSTEM (FASA); $20. 48K disk by Jordan Weisman for the Apple II. Play aid approved for ***Traveller.*** Published 1981.

***Traveller*** requires a lot of bookkeeping. There's sector maps, character and ship records, accounting, encounters, etc. A computer could speed up the game and make the whole thing more enjoyable for all. IDRS is an attempt at this. Records of ships are kept, and these ships may be sent through the worlds stored on disk. Encounters are rolled up and displayed. The basic mercantile functions from Book 2 (cargo, passengers, and trade goods) are provided for.

Too bad it's only half-complete. Even if that half was done well it would be useful, but there are so many flaws and weak points that I can't go into depth about them all. Here are my notes: Map is not ***Traveller*** standard subsector map. No hex numbers on map, not even X-Y coordinates. No world names. Hard to see where your ship is on the map. Menu structure in program is inconsistent. Documentation almost absent. Encounters cannot be modified. Allows illegal actions practically everywhere. Gives negative numbers of passengers; allows searching more than once and gives more than staterooms or low berths. Does not keep cargo info. Ignores X-boat routes. Hard to edit map – ship must be taken to each world and stats changed. Information often scrolls off-screen.


DALCON

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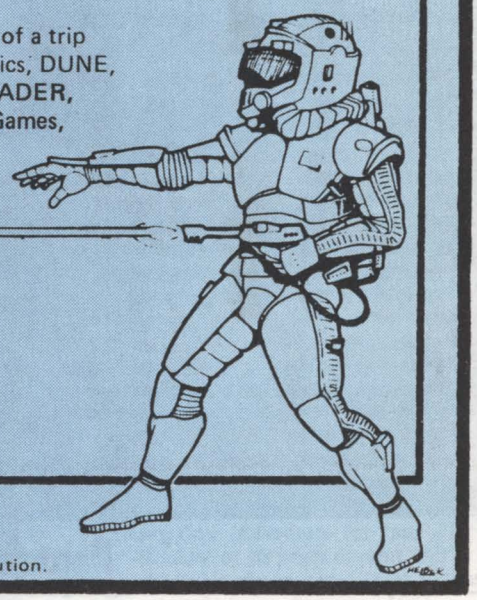

Richland College is an equal opportunity institution.

To buy goods, pencil and paper are necessary. Often gives more cargo than ship can hold. Does not keep track of characters. No way to list ships on file.

On the positive side, it seems to work for what little it does, and although it was released under the old DOS, the Muffin program works well. Also, since it's not protected, modifications are easy.

I would seriously recommend that FASA take this off the market and re-write it from the ground up. There's definitely room for a ***Traveller*** aid program on the market, but not this one.

*–John M. Morrison*

WIZARDRY, Revision 2 (Sir-Tech); $49.95. 48K disk by Andrew Greenberg and Robert Woodhead for the Apple II. 1 to 6 players; playing time indefinite. Published 1982.

WIZARDRY is a D&D simulation – not a puzzle-oriented adventure game, but a very involving dungeon/monster/treasure game. (For more information, see the featured review in TSG 46.) By popular demand, the authors have implemented a number of new features:

1) You can now Disband the party, leaving them in camp. This is good if they are hurt, out of spells, mostly poisoned, etc. Later, a fresher party can mount a rescue expedition.

2) Recovery no longer ages characters 10 years.

3) You may transfer characters onto the scenario disk from your backup disk.

4) If you have a friend with WIZARDRY, you may "clone" Revision 2 onto his disk.

By this time, your old disk should be wearing out. I definitely recommend sending the $5 in to transfer backup characters, as you'll get Revision 2 to boot.

*–John M. Morrison*


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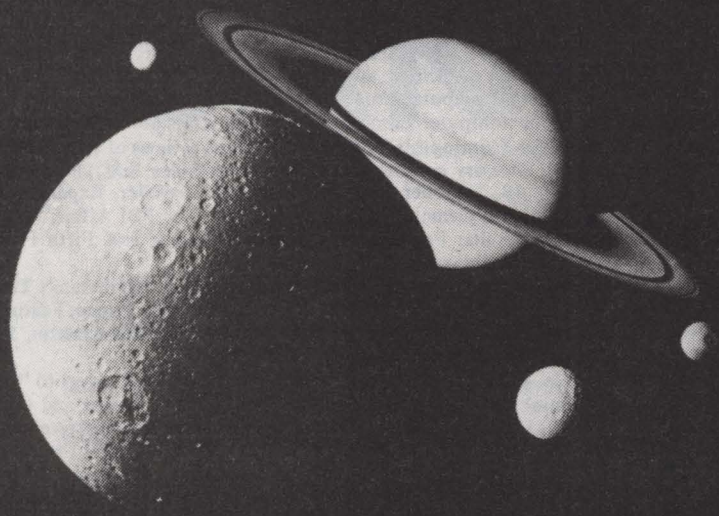
# UNIVERSE III



A computer-moderated correspondence game in which each player commands a starship entering a new universe . . . to explore, colonize, and conquer new worlds . . . contending with other players and unknown hazards! Each time you send in a turn, the computer evaluates it with respect to the current game situation and other players' moves, and sends you a printout of your current status. When you "meet" other players, you can send them messages . . . to share information, trade, negotiate or intimidate.

QUALITY – it's a licensed version of UNIVERSE II, rated the most popular PBM game in the country.

NO WAITING TO ENTER OR PLAY – Entries are processed on receipt. You'll be in a game within two weeks or your money back. And our turn system lets you move every week if you like – or take as long as you want between turns. Your results will generally be in the mail to you within two days of receipt of your turn!

NO DEADLINES – Since you set your own "turn length," you can't miss a turn!

NO EXTRA CHARGES – Our fee is $3 per ship or colony turn. We don't tack on fees for combat.

NO BIG DEPOSITS – Our entry fee is only $7, which covers a setup turn for one ship, rulebook, and one extra turn. Your starship will be assigned as soon as you send your name, address, and entry fee to:

**Central Texas Computing - - - - 710-S Southwest Tower - - - - Austin, TX 78701**

## PLAY BY MAIL

SPACE BATTLE (FBI); $2 per turn, $5 set-up, rules 25 cents. First run 1980.

This PBM game between two teams of ten players averages a turn every three weeks. Games may last from ten to over twenty turns. Nine of the team members have identical set-ups (one cruiser and three scouts, each with three dependent probes) while the tenth player is the commander, with a base ship and three battleships. The game is won when the opponents' base ship is destroyed. Space seems to be two-dimensional, with bases beginning over 25 times their maximal movement allowance apart. This makes it almost impossible for them to engage each other. Each commander controls his base's refueling function. That's important, because scouts and probes often run short of the energy needed for movement, attack, and defense. Disgruntled team members may mutiny and attempt to replace their commander.

The rules are clear and straightforward, taking only two pages of rather large type. FBI is an old and reliable company, and it tries to protect its good reputation. When the program crashed in early rounds, they ran the game at no charge for several turns. Things now run smoothly and errors are more likely to be yours than theirs.

It's *very* difficult to coordinate the activities of ten individuals, particularly when some lose interest and drop out. For a team to succeed you need a commander with a high personal charisma, a WATS line, and nine followers with square-root calculators. It's awfully hard to damage an actively played base, but child's play to destroy a drop-out. Unfortunately, more players have dropped out than finished in my two games.

SPACE BATTLE is a disappointment to Flying Buffalo's customers, who enjoyed their classic games. This one lacks the balance and fascination of ***StarWeb*** or ***Battle Plan.*** It might be interesting to a wargaming club, They could get together to discuss strategy and tactics, coordinating their movement. But the average PBMer won't find the trip worth the fare.

*–Sam Moorer*


# TSG BACK ISSUES

No. 15. Wizard and Olympica designer intros; Robotics in Traveller; Floating Hulks; Ogre Update; Orcs and their Weapons; computer gaming.

No. 16. WarpWar article; Classics Simulated in Melee; Alpha Omega; Demons! (Moties in Melee); 1977 game survey results – and a LOT of reviews.

No. 17. GEV designer's intro; strategy for Chitin: I; variants for Imperium, Melee, and a combination Ogre/Rivets variant; WarpWar fiction.

No. 18. IceWar designer's intro; variant scenarios for Invasion: America and War of the Ring; additional equipment for Traveller; mounted Melee; "Referee, Declare Thyself!" (role-playing GM technique).

No. 19. POND WAR; variant units and scenarios for GEV; combining Imperium and WarpWar; Battlefleet Mars variant; reviews of Swords & Sorcery, RuneQuest, and Raumkrieg; MicroGame design article.

No. 20. Olympica tactics; Psionics in Traveller; TARTARS & MARTYRS; Reality in Melee; designer's optional rules for Ice War; designer's article on Starships & Spacemen; "Rip-Off Blues" (wargaming frauds).

No. 21. Interview with Dave Arneson; running a MicroGame tournament; tactics for Ogre and GEV; spaceship miniatures; Black Hole variant rules, putting the Deryni into Melee; more reviews.

No. 22. Ice War tactics; Black Hole physics; PARTY BRAWL; 1978 SF/fantasy game survey results; Fantasy Trip short story.

No. 23. Invasion of the Air Eaters designer's article; Ogre meets Ice War; Sticks & Stones expansion; Vikings and Valde in The Fantasy Trip.

No. 24. Black Hole designer's intro; "The Psychology of Wargaming"; Naval Melee; "The Four-Howitzer Defense in Ogre;" variants for Chitin: I, The Creature that Ate Sheboygan, and John Carter of Mars.

No. 25. Stellar Conquest issue . . . designer's article, tournament tactics, and variant scenarios; also – strategy in Rivets; benefit-cost analysis for Ice War; "Everyday Life in The Fantasy Trip."

No. 26. Oneworld designer's intro; tactics in GEV; variations on Wizard; computers in wargaming; Life-sized Melee; and a variant that puts human forces into Rivets.

No. 27. Hot Spot's designer's intro; Time Travel; Nuke the Air Eaters (gaming atomic war); Weapons for Hobbits in TFT; Muskets in TFT; Game Design Part 1; 5 pages of game reviews.

No. 28. 1979 Game Survey results; Overmen in TFT; A Guide to SF/Fantasy Game Publishers; Task Force Games report; Writers' and Artists' guides; 7 pages of reviews; Game Design Part 2; Deus Ex Machina.

No. 29. Fantasy Trip designer's intro; Painting Fantasy Miniatures; Fantasy and SF game magazines surveyed; Game Design Part 3; more Deus Ex Machina; 7 pages of reviews.

No. 30. KUNG FU 2100; Painting Fantasy Miniatures Part II; Index to Game Articles; Game Design Part 4; Programmable Calculators; 10 pages of reviews.

No. 31. "Sam Beowulf"; 1980 Game Software survey; Game Design Part 5; Random Maze Generation; 9 pages of reviews.

No. 32. Traveller issue: Alternate Character Types, reviews of play aids, scenarios, and variants; also Game Design Part 6; Deus Ex Machina; "Minus Two Reaction;" software survey update; Yaquinto Games report; 9 pages of reviews.

No. 33. Play-by-mail issue: Feature reviews of four PBM games, a Warp War Campaign, Survey of PBM companies; also, Contest Report; Company Report from Schubel and Son; "End Game;" GEV scenario; Game Design Part 7; Deus Ex Machina; The Good Guys, Part I; and 10 pages of reviews.

No. 34. Miniatures issue: Cardboard Heroes Designer's Notes, LOTR Miniatures, Painting Fantasy Miniatures Advanced Techniques, Survey of miniatures manufacturers; also "The Challenge;" Artifact Designer's Notes and Expansion Rules; 3-D Displays II; Game Design Part 8; Wish Contest winner; and 8 pages of reviews.

No. 35. The 1980 Game Survey; Solitaire Ogre; Notes for Novice DMs; The War of the Worlds featured; Insane Variants on Stomp!; Character Contest results; More Psionics for Traveller; Game Design Part IX; Deus Ex Machina; and 9 pages of reviews.

No. 36. Computing damage in Star Fleet Battles; The Fire Web, Artifact for Traveller; a Featured Review of Akalabeth; Eon Products Company Report; The Ten Deadly Sins of Computer Game Programming; Computer Graphics contest winner; and 8 pages of reviews.

No. 37. Gaming the Alien; Hyborean Risk; Improved Mission Resolution for Freedom in the Galaxy; Troubles in Valetia; Cosmic Encounter Review; FGU Company Report; Winners of the Weapons Contest; Ten Deadly Sins Part II; and 6 pages of reviews.

No. 38. 1980 Game Survey Results; Designer Notes for The Lords of UnderEarth; Used ships for Traveller; Selling Your Game Article; Expert D&D and Time War reviewed; Combination Game Contest; The Complaints Department; and 7 pages of reviews.

No. 39. Computer issue: Designer's Notes on Akalabeth, Strategic Simulations Report, Strategy in the Warp Factor, Computers to Go, a TRS-80 Briefing, An update on the gaming world; also Rumor Reliability in Traveller; Scenario for Triplanetary; Magic contest results; Simple Traps; and 8 pages of reviews.

No. 40. Traveller issue: Planet of Adventure: Tschai, a new Traveller combat system, Non-Human Races contest winners, Aboard the Leviathan; also Cumulative Index to Game Articles; Game Design: RPGs; Deus Ex Machina; and 6 pages of reviews.

No. 41. D&D issue: Tips for Thieves, Alternate Races for D&D, DM Don'ts, (Your Name) and the Holy Grail; also Tips for TFT Players; more Non-humans contest winners; Game Design (last of the series); Deus Ex Machina; and 9 pages of reviews.

No. 42. Star Trek issue: Designer's Notes, Official Errata, Star Fleet Battle Manual reviewed, programming dialog in Trek computer games; also Metamorphosis Alpha Notebook; glossary of game terms – and what they really mean; combined arms in D&D; more nonhuman races; GEV contest winners; and 8 pages of reviews.

No. 43. Origins Report; Expanded Combat for Traveller; Designer's Notes for Swordthrust; Diplomacy Variants; More Killer; "Sword's Man" by Timothy Zahn; Deus Ex Machina; and 9 pages of reviews.

No. 44. Special feature: AFVs in Traveller; Beware the Uranium Dragon; Fantasy Demography; another scenario for Killer; Featured review of Universe; Deus Ex Machina; and 8 pages of reviews.

No. 45. Computer issue: Automated Simulations company report, Play-by-Phone computer gaming; also winning strategies for StarWeb; Designer's Notes for Grimtooth's Traps and Car Wars; reviews of Robot War and Nebula 19; Glossary contest results; Murphy's Rules; and 11 pages of reviews.

No. 46. Traveller issue: Terrorists in Traveller, Expanding Traveller, Traveller Supplement – Flare Star; also "The FBI Affair;" Constellation contest results; Featured Reviews of Wizardry and Fifth Frontier War; Deus Ex Machina, and 9 pages of reviews.

No. 47. D&D issue: Remedial Role-Playing, Kimberani's Tomb adventure for D&D; also, Designer's Notes for Barbarian Prince; Featured Review of Barbarian Prince; Physicians in Traveller; a Killer scenario, 1981 Game Survey; and 9 pages of reviews.

No. 48. Adventure Game Supplement: "Storm," sequel to "Flare Star;" "Symmkyn's Edge;" Look! Up in the Sky; The Balrog and the Finger of Death; Miniatures for FRP Games, Reviews of The Shattered Alliance and the 2nd Edition of High Guard; Deus Ex Machina, and 11 pages of reviews.

No. 49. Traveller as Science Fantasy; Designer's Notes for Star Viking; The EM-50 for Car Wars; The Flinger and the Blob: New character types for TFT; D&D Without Magicians; Tools for Terrorists in Traveller; Designers' Notes for Beyond the Stellar Empire; Featured Reviews of Starlord and Call of Cthulhu; and 10 pages of reviews.

***Send $2.50 per copy, plus 50 cents per order for postage and handling, to TSG, P.O. Box 18957, Austin, TX 78760-8957.***

# GAME MASTER

*GAME MASTER exists to answer questions on your favorite games. If you have a rules question or play problem, send it in. Questions to be answered will be chosen on the basis of general interest. They will be first referred to the game publisher or designer. If no response is received, GAME MASTER will offer its own interpretation of the rule. Sorry – no individual replies are possible.*

### Ogre/G.E.V.

In ***Ogre***, is it a good idea to put a howitzer right beside the CP?

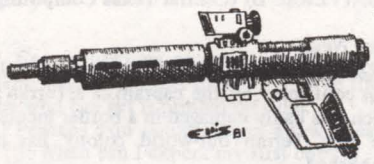
Ian Parsons

*That's not really a rules question, but it's simple enough to deserve an answer. Generally, it's NOT a good idea, because the Ogre can charge straight toward the CP and knock the HWZ out on the way. It's better to offset the HWZ a little bit, so the Ogre has to detour to hit it.*

*SJ*

How many men in a "squad" of infantry in ***Ogre***?

Harley Stimson



*Usually four to six . . . that being the smallest number that can support each other effectively in the hypothetical future situation. A single man would need eyes in the back of his head, and couldn't throw enough shells to seriously endanger anything but another single infantryman. (I'm working on a game about this, but don't know when it will be out.)*

*SJ*

In *G.E.V.*, can a water hex be mined?

Joe Zaepfel

*I don't see why not – treat it just like any other mined hex.*

*SJ*

### Dungeons & Dragons

How can a mage recharge a magical item that uses "charges"? It is a spell?

Joe Zaepfel

*Jon Pickens, of the TSR design staff, replies:*

*Currently, there is no "official" procedure for this, but the following guidelines may help:*

*First, the DM must balance cost plus time out of the campaign against the benefit the character will receive from the item. It should not cost more than making a new one, but can't be too cheap, or it will unbalance the campaign.*

*Recharging a wand is a special magical operation involving putting magical energy into the wand (1 spell level = 1 charge). The preparations and required test are such that 1 week out of the campaign is the minimum any recharging operation should require. The cost will vary between campaigns, but should be in line with the cost of getting the same effect from other types of magic: scrolls, NPC caster, etc. A minimum of 250-300 gp per charge is reasonable if gold and magic are on the scarce side.*

***Other considerations:*** *The recharging caster should be able to make the item being recharged, and should know the command words for the item. The DM can include a random factor to prevent the player from knowing exactly how many charges are going into the wand, as well as including a chance to accidently ruin or backfire the device (especially if it is overcharged). To further control the recharging process, the DM may also require rare material components for the process that the character may either buy at greatly inflated prices or go adventuring for.*

*In short, recharging is as easy or difficult as the DM wishes to make it, and each DM is responsible for the game balance of his or her own campaign.*

*Jon Pickens*


Life isn't easy in **The Big City.** Especially if you're young and don't have a job. And in **The Big City,** only one out of every six hundred teenagers is employed. Yet the average adolescent has an income of more than UN$100 (United Nations dollars or 'undees') each week. How do they get it? They take it from someone . . .

# GANGLORD

A correspondence game of juvenile delinquency in

**The Big City** of the future.

In **GANGLORD,** each player assumes the role of a gang warlord by directing the gang's members in activities of expansion, extortion, and conflict. **GANGLORD** is moderated by a game-master using a computer for turn processing. Each turn represents two or more weeks in the life of the gang. The set-up fee is $10.00 (including the first three turns) and $2.00 per turn thereafter. A rulebook may be purchased separately for $1.75 (fully redeemable towards set-up fee). Send all queries and set-up fees to:

**Big City**

**Box 1804**

**Eugene, OR 97440**

# PBM Update

### BEYOND THE STELLAR EMPIRE (Adventures by Mail)

*Company News:* We are pleased to announce the addition of another gamemaster to our staff, Michael Popolizio. We are interested in corresponding with those who have designed an original PBM game. Please write us for details before submitting a game design. In preparation for the upcoming playtest of our new computer moderated game, we have purchased a high-speed printer. It is currently being used to speed up turn processing.

*Game News:* A bold attack was made against SMS colony Janles in the Trian System. The SMS Stingship, SMS Rimjack and GTT Gypsy invaded Janles after landing at the starport. The attackers easily defeated the colony forces and occupied the west quadrant of Janles for several weeks. Governor Zinski of Janles organized a counterattack and vanquished the invaders. All three ships escaped. However, the Rimjack and Gypsy landed at the SMS headquarters colony and their ships were impounded. The exact "deal" used by Periphery Director Fores to lure them there is not known.

Following a massive upgrading in colony structures and life supports, IAN colony Lenz began receiving freighter loads of Imperial Marines. The CPT does not know the final destination for these troops but rumors persist of alien sightings. The Emperor has decreed that effective retroactively, the following Imperial Law will be enforced:

If a colony is established on a world longer than 26 weeks, the colony legally owns the world. Anyone wishing to build a colony on such a world legally, must first obtain permission from the owning colonies. Such permission must be documented by the Empire. Failure to file the proper papers with the ISS will result in the posting of the new colony.

*Robert Cook*

### UNIVERSE III (Central Texas Computing)

*Game News:*

*Quadrant V.* Reports of a Muar enclave have been confirmed by the captain of a Terran ship which was badly damaged in a border incursion. The first Terran out-world colony has been established.

*Quadrant VI.* A Terran captain reports sighting aboriginal alien inhabitants on one of the habitable worlds. A mutiny aboard another Terran ship has been suppressed after almost 25% of the crew were killed.

*Quadrant VII.* Initial exploration has begun in this quadrant, but no alien contacts are reported.

*David Bolduc*

### UNIVERSE II (Clemens & Associates)

*Game News:*

*Quadrant I.* Major trade routes have been established with fleets of freighters visiting outlying colonies. Several commanders are becoming quite wealthy.

*Quadrant II.* Several major forces may be combining to attack the Phalanx, a ship branded as outlaw by many alliances.

*Quadrant III.* Long-range exploration has discovered new Etuel star systems in an area once thought to be Muar territory.

*Quadrant IV.* Unity forces continue to increase their wealth and strength. Final purpose of the build-up is unknown.

*Regajian Empire.* Sizable gains have been made in Quadrant I. New members of the Empire are encouraged to form battlegroups with friends who can be trusted. Those individuals who wish may request assignment to the main Regajian Fleets.

*Ixtli Empire.* Additional fortifications are being established in anticipation of Regajian attacks.

*Muar Empire.* Major rebuilding was required after Unity destroyed one of our Quadrant III bases. New fortifications were delivered by several Muar Raiders.

*Jon Clemens*

### SPACE BATTLE (Flying Buffalo, Inc.)

*Rules Change:* Flying Buffalo, Inc. will be changing the format of ***Space Battle.*** Now, instead of signing up for a single position, the person who signs up will be the commander, and he must provide his own subcommanders (or he may play all the positions himself). More details on the revised rules are available for 50 cents.

*Company News:* Flying Buffalo, Inc. announces a new game, available in March. ***Heroic Fantasy*** is a role-playing game where the player selects a party of fighters and magic-users (humans, elves, dwarves, fairies, etc.) and explores a maze of dungeon rooms. Rules cost $1. ***Trajan's Treacherous Trap*** (Flying Buffalo's hand-moderated game) continues. Although the game has been running for well over a year, no one has yet found the entrance to the second level.

*Rick Loomis*

### CRIMELORDS (Gamers Unlimited)

*Game News:* The inner sectors continue to be a source of unrest in Var. Many of the weaker, less popular leaders have been subject to open revolt by their populace, spurred on by the overthrow of the Marquis de Sade. The Marquis was assassinated while trying to prevent the rebels from joining with the House of Taylor regulars arriving on the scene. After a brief period of fighting in front of the fortress of the now-deceased Marquis, the rebels and their supporters drove the demoralized home troops out and declared the beginning of a new regime, named The People's Republic, with Franklin Katts, a popular ruler, as their leader. There has been much speculation on the identity of the assassin. It is generally believed he was an agent from the Assassin's Guild, but there are many theories on who hired him, as the rebels did not have the funds to do it. The Tjarkin Dynasty has continued its aggressions against the House of Taylor. Already, overwhelming Tjarkin forces have driven Count Taylor's regulars out of the small border states such as The Terrorist's Haven and have claimed the territories in the name of The Awesome One.

*Trevor Lyre*

### CATACOMBS OF CHAOS (Schubel & Son)

*Company News:* The success of ***Catacombs of Chaos*** has prompted us to move ahead vigorously on plans for several other titles in 1982. One tentatively titled ***Intrigue*** will deal with a wide range of "cloak-and-dagger" operations centered around governmental overthrow in the far future. We are also working on a large-scale tactical space combat game that will add realism on a level beyond anything yet available.

*George Schubel*

*PBM Update reports on professionally-moderated play-by-mail games. Notices are monthly. Copy deadline is 60 days previous to the first of the month, for the issue in which the notice is to appear. (Deadline for the July issue is May 1.) All copy should be typed and double-spaced. Notices should not exceed 200 words in length. TSG reserves the right to edit copy as necessary.*

# News & Plugs

Yaquinto Publications, Inc., has been dissolved. The company will continue doing business as a sole proprietorship – Robert Yaquinto Printing Co.

Strategic Simulations has released two new computer games: ***The Road to Gettysburg*** and ***Pursuit of the Graf Spee.*** Both 48K for the Apple; price $59.95. ***The Shattered Alliance*** has been released for the 48K Atari. Price: $39.95.

Digital Marketing is preparing an ***Asteroids*** game for the IBM Personal Computer.

Dynacomp has announced 11 new releases for the Atari. Titles include: ***Escape from Volantium, Lil' Men From Mars, Midway,*** and ***Super Subchase.***

Judges Guild is offering a series of play aids for ***DragonQuest.***

Simulations Canada has a new address: P.O. Box 452, Bridgewater, Nova Scotia B4V 2X6.

Edu-Ware is releasing ***Rendezvous,*** a space shuttle simulation by a NASA scientist. Available for the Apple and Atari. Price: $39.95.

Simulations Canada is working on a game called ***Descent Operations,*** about the invasion of solar systems and planets.

Coming from Gamelords: ***The Fantasy System,*** a new FRPG based on ***Thieves' Guild, Mine Eyes Have Seen the Glory,*** a Civil War RPG, and ***Rogues in Space,*** an SF thief game.

We regret to inform you that for a variety of reasons this year's convention effort by the Eastern Gaming Association has unfortunately been terminated. We no longer have the capability this year to administrate a convention of the quality that you have come to expect from us these past years due to various employment opportunities that have been offered in the last month and a half to every staffer involved with the preparatory work on the convention. It makes little sense for us to compete with Origins when all it can result in is a financial loss for both organizations. Our last show took a loss due to the four-figure damage bill caused by both attendees and manufacturers. There is, therefore, no reasonable probability that two shows on the east coast, both being advertised nationally, could be financially viable.

We wish to state that neither EGA or its staff have any involvement with any show that is going to be held on the east coast this year. Any claims to the contrary are false. No organizations will have any access to mailing lists and other administrative records collected by EGA. Any adventure gaming conventions attempting to take advantage of any market penetration made by EGA, especially under the names of Origins '80 or GenCon® East, will be doing so with the express disapproval of EGA. EGA will take whatever steps are deemed necessary by its board of directors to maintain its reputation among the gaming public. The future prospects of any conventions being run under EGA auspices will be announced at the Origins bidding neeting at Baltimore this year, as the staff of the convention will have settled into their new positions and they can evaluate the prospects from a business perspective of any additional conventions run under our auspices.

Eastern Gaming Association

I did not like the additions to my "Terrorist" article. When I write something I expect it to be printed *as is.* I also did not like the altered article requiring the usage of non-GDW materials; I prefer writing ***Traveller*** articles that require the use of GDW materials *only.* That way, one need not worry that the rules he is following may be vioded [*sic*] by future GDW releases.

Kennneth [*sic*] W. Burke
W. Hartford, CT

*If someone insists we print his manuscript as is, we will . . . in the unlikely event we use it at all. Others will be subjected to editing and playtest.*

Congratulations on acquiring *Fire & Movement* magazine. I feel that you may be the only one who can get it printed on time.

Perhaps you could answer a few questions:

1. When can I expect my first copy?
2. Will remaining issues under the old subscriptions, through Baron Publishing be honored?

I am enclosing a check for the first (12) issues of F&M.

Now that you have done all that (bought *Fire & Movement*) . . .

Have you ever thought about . . .
*The Grenadier . . .*
*Gamer's Guide . . .*
*Gryphon . . .*

Alan Lawson

*Well, we'll get F&M out on time or go crazy trying. You should already have your first copy. It was mailed about a week after TSG 49, and you're reading this in TSG 50. And YES – we will honor remaining issues under old subscriptions ordered from Baron.*

*For details of our plan to buy up the whole gaming industry, see page 24 in this issue.*

*–SJ*

Who's your Canadian dealer (TSG and SJG)? What Canadian cons will you be at? Do you do seminars?

PS – Did you know that a Belgian F-N 4RM/62 armored car "suitable for urban operations" and authorized for *internal* security, has as standard armament a 60mm mortar, and an optional 90mm CATI gun, plus a 7.62 mm MG? That will break up a riot!

PPS – Are you looking for freelance writers or game designers?

–(illegible)
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*Right now, our only Canadian distributor is Cangamco – but they sell to many retail stores, and we deal directly with many other Canadian retailers. If you can't find TSG/SJG at your local hobby shop, gripe to them!*

*Canada is a little to far for us to travel – yet. But I'm always glad to run a seminar at any con I attend.*

*Remind me not to start any riots next time I go to Belgium.*

*We're* **always** *looking for writers. We'll LOOK at any outside design we're sent – but we get so many, and can publish so few, that the odds are bad. For a good game article (especially a variant or strategy article) the odds become very good.*

*–SJ*

I appreciate the free issue in exchange for the jumbled one, but it wasn't necessary – I'd rather receive a jumbled mag I read than an orderly one I don't read.

–Rembert N. Parker
Knoxville, TN

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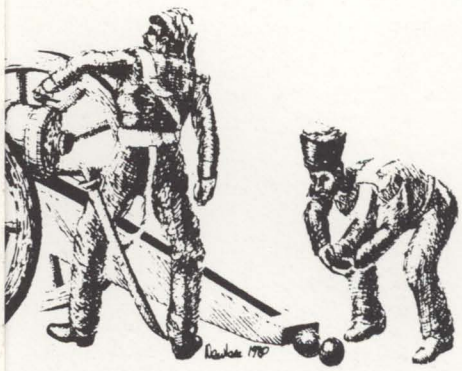

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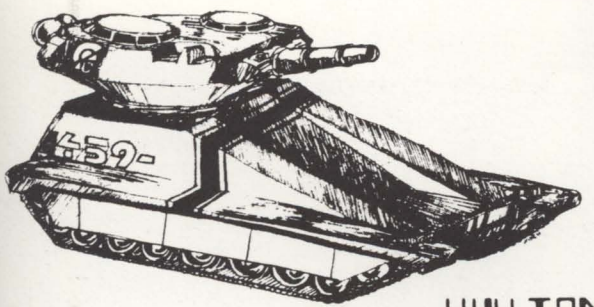

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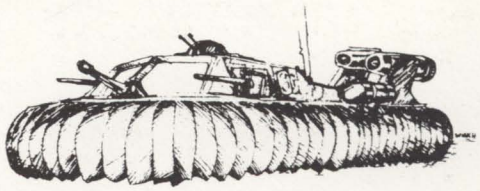

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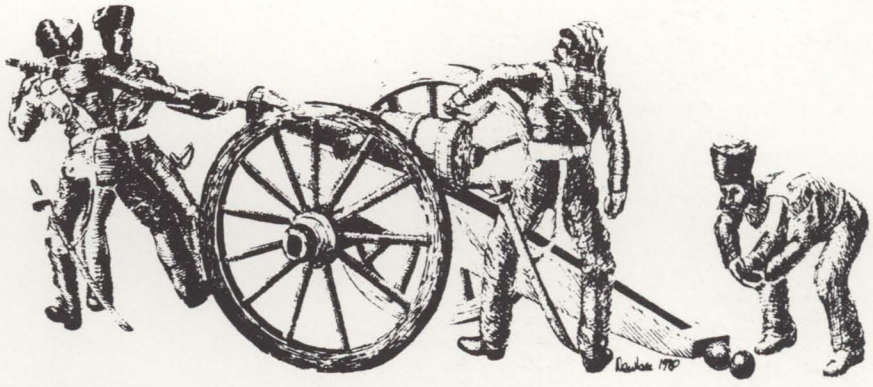

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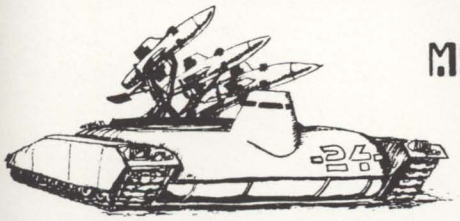

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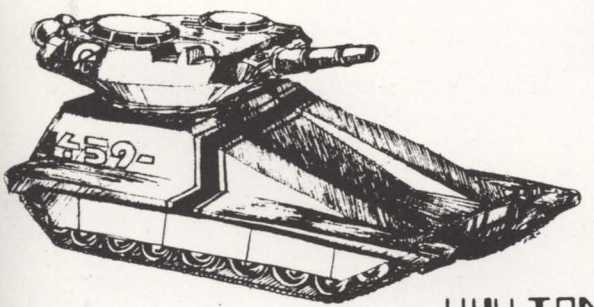

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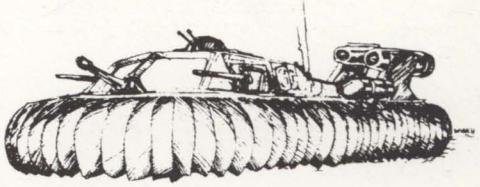

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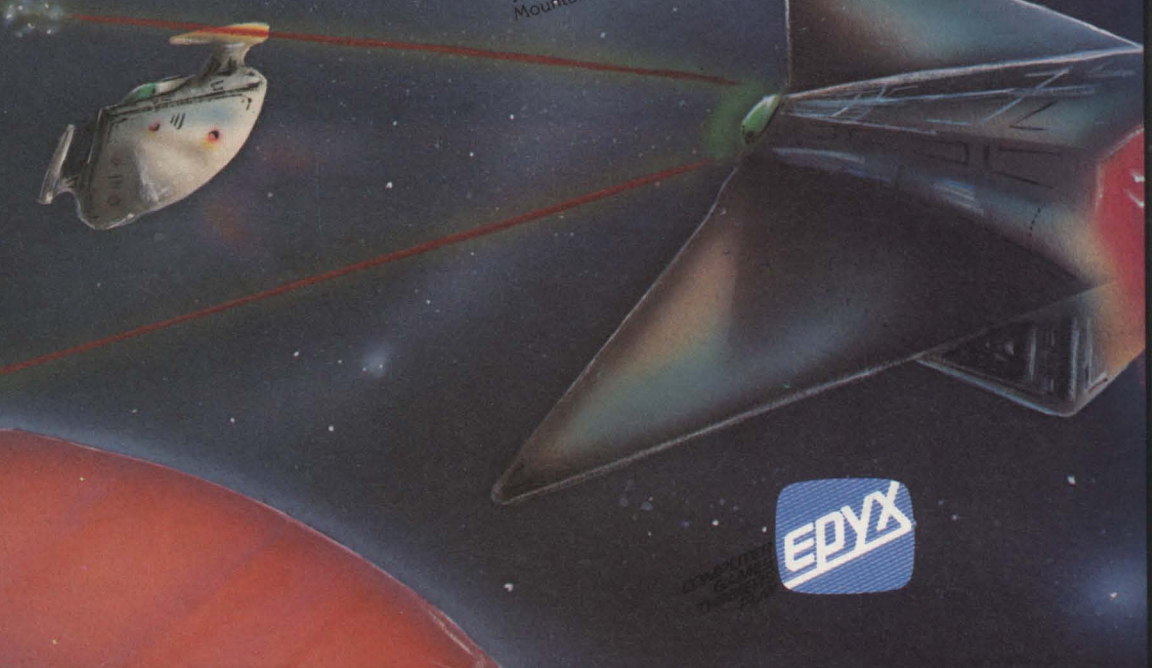
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